Man And Message

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MAN *and* MESSAGE

MAN *and* MESSAGE

EMINENT PREACHERS
who
EXEMPLIFY CHIEF PRINCIPLES
of
MINISTERIAL EFFICIENCY

THE SAMUEL A. CROZER LECTURES *for* 1926

By JOHN HUMPSTONE
PASTOR EMERITUS *of* EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH
in BROOKLYN, N. Y.

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To the Memory

of

HENRY GRIGGS WESTON, D. D., LL. D.

FIRST PRESIDENT *of* CROZER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

In Gratitude and Affection
By His Son in the Ministry

. . . Some one peculiar quality
Doth so possess a man, that it doth draw
All his affects, his spirits, and his powers
In their confluctions, all to run one way.

—Ben Jonson.

PREFACE

THESE lectures were delivered before the Faculty and Students of the Crozer Theological Seminary at intervals in 1926. They had in mind beginners in the ministry; in an old idiom, those "commencing preacher." Hence their elementary, sometimes hortatory, character; revoicing, in an outsider's tone, the usual counsels of the homiletical classroom. They are not essays in the biography of the pulpit. By direct address they aim to correlate familiar precepts with historical examples of their effectiveness. This, if they have any, is their only novelty.

Written with hearers, not readers, in mind, they are now published not on the initiative of the author, but in deference to the wish of President Milton G. Evans and of some others who heard them. To him and them the Lecturer's thanks for his opportunity and their appreciation.

RYE, N. Y., JANUARY, 1927.

STATEMENT

OF

THE SAMUEL A. CROZER LECTURESHIP

IN

THE CROZER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

The Samuel A. Crozer Lectureship, founded 1880, provides for special lectures to be delivered at the Seminary during each year. The instrument defining the object of Lectureship says:

> The person to deliver these lectures shall be chosen by the Faculty of the Seminary, subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees. . . The topics of these lectures to be subjects that are profitable to be presented to Christian ministers or students for the ministry. In selecting lecturers the Faculty shall not be restricted to the Baptist denomination, but may appoint from any denomination termed evangelical, from laymen as well as ministers, and from citizens of foreign countries or our own as they (the Faculty) see fit. The lecturer may give single lectures, or a course of lectures, as circumstances may indicate or the Faculty may appoint.

On this foundation courses of lectures have been delivered annually since 1880.

MILTON G. EVANS,
President Crozer Theological Seminary.

JANUARY, 1927.

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I

ATHANASIUS
(297–373)

PREACHING AND CONTROVERSY

ATHANASIUS

I

SIXTEEN centuries separate us from Athanasius and the dawn of his fame, at Nicea. Across this wide gulf of time he still looms in heroic proportions. It is singular with what unanimity he is estimated in this kind. Epiphanius, a contemporary, called him "the father of orthodoxy." Gregory Nazianzen devoted to him a glowing panegyric, which begins, "When I praise Athanasius I praise virtue itself, because he combines all virtues in himself." Möhler, a nineteenth-century German, declared that "the narrative of his life is a panegyric which words can only enfeeble." Theodoret, a fifth-century historian, named him "the great enlightener." A sixth-century abbot, said to one of his pupils, "If you come across a saying of Athanasius and have not whereon to record it, write it on your clothes." Neander, found in him "the inspiring soul of the dispute with Arius." Gibbon, little given to such praise of ecclesiastics, is all but carried away by his admiration for Athanasius. He calls him "the great"; "the most sagacious of the Christian theologians"; declares that his "immortal name will never be separated from the doctrine . . . to whose defense he consecrated every moment and every faculty of his being." Page after page of Gibbon's twenty-first chapter is devoted to evidence that warrants him in such a judgment as this:

"Athanasius displayed a superiority of character and abilities which would have fitted him, far better than the degenerate sons of Constantine, for the government of a great monarchy." Our American historian, Schaff, thinks that as between the first Constantine and Athanasius, the latter better deserves the title "the great," in that "his greatness was intellectual and moral and proved itself in suffering and in years of warfare against mighty errors and the imperial court." English churchmen join the chorus. The judicious Hooker says, "of Athanasius there was nothing observed, throughout that long tragedy [his life], other than such as very well became a wise man to do and a righteous to suffer." Dean Stanley reckons him "the chief theologian of his age, in one sense of all ages." Newman, in *Lyra Apostolica,* sings of him as

> The royal-hearted Athanase
> With Paul's own mantle blest.

Why put forth, at starting, such a catena of praises? Not quite, if the kindly critic will believe it, because I have nothing of my own to say. The maxim "What always, what everywhere, what by all is believed," if no criterion for doctrine, is surely weighty as a judgment upon character. But my real reason for such an initial push of unanimous and authoritative opinion is the hope that it may press men, looking forward to the ministry but not yet in it, to a study for themselves of this forceful, fascinating man.

There is much in his story that is romantic; much more that is pathetic; not a little that is humorous; but every fiber of it is heroic. It is a regal, if antique, figure that emerges from every changing scene; to live with whom, in imagination, is to feel the impulse of a mighty soul, the thrill of a great devotion, the flame of a passionate zeal for truth.

For the romance of it there is the story of his early youth, which some deem legendary. With other lads, sporting by the shore, he played bishop and baptized his mates in the sea. The scene was observed by the Archbishop from the windows of his palace. He summoned the boys to his presence. Athanasius so impressed him that he installed him in his house, cherished him through growing, studious years, as a son might have been loved. In time he became Alexander's chief deacon and secretary. In that capacity he wrote two treatises—one against the Greeks and their polytheism; the other a marvelous study, for a man so young, of the Incarnation. If he did not prompt, he certainly participated in, the early disciplinary measures against Arius, which led ultimately to the calling of the first great council of the Church by Constantine. To this assembly Athanasius accompanied Archbishop Alexander as his attendant deacon. Though a subordinate he managed to exert the influence of a principal and to make himself a main force in the final decisions of the Council. Within five months of their return to Alexandria, the Archbishop died. At the age of twenty-eight Athanasius was conse-

crated as his successor in the chair of St. Mark, becoming thus the *papa* or pope, of the Eastern Church, a position, at that stage of the church's life, of universal relations and authority. "The head of the Alexandrian Church," said Gregory Nazianzen, "is the head of the world." Given as Gregory is to hyperbole, his statement, in this case, is factual not imaginative.

In this see-city of Alexandria, and its surrounding Egypt, mingled many contrasted elements of life and thought. With some of them romance has busied itself down to our own day. An eager and, on occasion, a fierce folk were the Alexandrines and the Egyptians. In the streets pagans touched elbows with Christians, heretics with the orthodox, philosophers with seamen. It took but a spark to start a blaze among them. Antipathies were constant, clashes frequent, riot and slaughter occasional. The Christian populace, bishops, presbyters, and common folk alike, were devoted to Athanasius from the start. As time went on their attachment grew to a passionate enthusiasm in his interest. Attempts by the emperors who favored the Arians to supplant him with other and less worthy men, were fiercely resented. Once, after such a banishment, when he was allowed to return and resume his rule, the people streamed out to meet him, "like the Nile in flood"—the comparison is Gregory's. Vast crowds acclaimed him. They turned his reception into more than an emperor's triumph. So lasting was the impression on those who observed the

scene that "the day when Athanasius came home" became the measure by which later festivities were judged.

But the people paid dearly for their devotion to their Archbishop. More than once, the military of the city broke in upon their assemblies, under imperial orders, at cruel cost to them. That night scene in the Church of St. Theonas when Athanasius with a crowd of worshipers kept vigil in preparation for the Eucharist is difficult to match for its ferocity and terror. The slaughter in the circus at Thessalonica by order of Theodosius, the irruption of the Turks into Santa Sophia, and the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre are its, near and far, historical parallels. While Athanasius from his throne led the people in the recital of Psalm One Hundred Thirty-six and their voices poured out in a volume of trustful praise the responses "For his mercy endureth forever," the doors of the church were burst open by the soldiers sent to arrest the Archbishop; a flight of arrows swept through the church; swords flashed and were fleshed, the shrieks of the wounded filled the air; nuns were seized and stripped, and the edifice was despoiled of its treasures. Through all the tumult and horror Athanasius kept his head; urged the escape of others, but himself refused to go out until the unwounded of his flock were safe. At last, swept outward by the pressure, he somehow (himself said, "he knew not how") found a way, through the darkness without, to safety.

In the deserts, adjacent to Alexandria, dwelt groups of hermits, in huts and caves, leading ascetic lives. Among them was Anthony, the most renowned of them all for sanctity. He was the admirer and close friend of Athanasius, who wrote his life—though some have challenged the authenticity of the work. Athanasius had much sympathy with their manner of life, and afterwards introduced the practises of these monks into the Western Church, during his exile at Rome, thus becoming the father of monasticism in Europe. In the company of these Egyptian hermits he often refreshed his spirit. They welcomed him eagerly, gave assent to his doctrine, becoming zealous adherents of the orthodox view. Among them, too, he found his securest refuge from the malice of his persecutors, and a golden opportunity to use such seasons of enforced absence from his capital in the labors of authorship. Some of his most effective writing was done there. Once as he approached, by night, such a hiding-place in the Thebaid, to claim sanctuary from his foes, a crowd of monks, bearing torches, came out to meet him, as he rode upon an ass led by their abbot Theodore. As they drew near, the gratified Athanasius burst out with Isaiah's words, "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as doves to their cotes?" adding to Theodore, "These men devoted to humility and obedience are the Fathers, not I." "Remember us in your prayers," pleaded Theodore, to which request the kindled spirit of Athanasius replied, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem."

But it is the pathetic in the life of Athanasius that exceeds. It is sympathy that is oftenest evoked by the story; and that passes into protest against the injustice and the indignities that were heaped upon him, not merely by his rulers but by his associates in the church. The conversion of Constantine had brought the State into a relation of authority to the Church. The Emperor had come to regard himself as the custodian of the faith, with the right to insist upon ecclesiastical uniformity. In his view, a feeling his immediate successors shared, peace in the Church was necessary to security for the Empire. To secure both, other effort having failed, he summoned the bishops and confessors to Nicea. When the three hundred and eighteen who are said to have composed the Council had reached a decision, he promptly fell in with it, made the creed it had framed an expression of his own faith and will, banishing the recalcitrant Eusebius of Nicomedia and two other bishops who refused to sign the creed. But the issue would not down. Agitation and discussion continued. Intrigue began. The emperor wavered under the influence of compromisers. He was induced to think a middle way between the extremists of either party might better secure peace and unity. Thus the door was opened to plotting of every sort. The women of the court, the eunuch-chamberlains, the imperial favorites of every rank, lent themselves as tools to agitators against the orthodox and their leader Athanasius. Arians and semi-Arians alike, upon him concentrated their malice. They

poisoned the mind of Constantine, and, after his, that of his son Constantius against the ever-active and aggressive Archbishop of Alexandria. Eusebius of Nicomedia was the source from whom much of the intrigue sprang; round him it all revolved. He may have believed sincerely that the middle way was the sure path to the unity of the Church. But he was more courtier and politician than bishop, and did not scruple to instigate, and sometimes himself to use, false and slanderous methods in his attacks upon Athanasius, and the effort to make void the Nicene decision. Athanasius, by him and his cabal, was accused at one time and another of sedition, sacrilege, insubordination, imprisoning bishops without cause, hindering the corn export on which Constantinople depended, in one instance, even of murder. In evidence of this latter charge his enemies went about with a box containing an arm, supposedly belonging to the corpse of the murdered bishop. It proved all but ridiculously easy for Athanasius to answer such charges when he could secure an audience of the Emperor, or was summoned before a synod, largely composed of his enemies. One of the humorous incidents of his career is connected with this charge of murder and its disproval. The friends of the Archbishop were able to secure the person of the supposedly murdered Arsenius, who, as part of the plot, had gone into hiding. Before the council of Tyre to which he had been summoned, Athanasius, produced a muffled figure. Demanding, "Does any one here know Arsenius?" he withdrew

the cover from the man's face and looking round asked, "Is this Arsenius whom I murdered?" Then drawing out one hand after another from the man's cloak, he said: "Let none ask for the third hand, which I am said to have cut off. Two hands and only two has every human being received from the Creator of all things." Doubtless his sense of humor often relieved his spirit, under attack. He had a ready wit; a sharp tongue when he thought a thrusting retort was called for. As the result of such machinations as these he was five times driven into exile, and spent, altogether, at varying intervals twenty years of the forty-six of his official life outcast from his see, sometimes permitted to dwell in cities abroad, as at Treves and Rome, but sometimes, too, compelled to flee for his life to hiding-places in the desert or in the environs of his capital. Does any one appeal to the proverb, "Where there is smoke there must be fire," thinking that so many and so various charges made, some must have been true? But the only fire in the case is the flame of jealousy and hate. Successive scrutiny of all available evidence, by many searchers, fully vindicates the honor of Athanasius. He had to fight not only for his bishopric, but always for his opportunity to serve his faith. He fought to a standstill emperor after emperor—Constantine, Constantius, Julian, and Jovian, all of whom died before him. Hooker's resounding phrase is strictly in accord with fact: "This was the plain condition of those times—the whole world against Athanasius and

Athanasius against it." No figure is so nearly like his as the Abdiel of John Milton:

> The Seraph Abdiel, faithful found;
> Among the faithless, faithful only he;
> Among innumerable false unmoved,
> Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified,
> His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal;
> Nor number nor example with him wrought
> To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
> Though single . . .

Never, till Valens, after a brief opposition, yielded him rest at last, was he allowed to settle down in security for the final seven years of his old age, to a service unchallenged, and a usefulness unbroken by imperial interference. A letter of Hilary of Poictiers, called by some the Athanasius of the West, written to the Emperor Constantius, is a fair picture of those disordered and contentious times:

> It is for us a very perilous and even deplorable fact that there are as many creeds as inclinations, as many doctrines as characters, as many sources of blasphemy spring up as there are vices among us . . . We repent of what we have done, we defend those who repent, we anathematise those whom we have defended . . . reciprocally tearing one another to pieces, we have been the cause of each other's ruin . . . we get up quarrels about uncertainties and mutually condemn each other, till scarcely any one is of Christ.

The fact that eighteen different creeds were in circulation was the warrant for Hilary's distress. Nor was there wanting what to us is a humorous side to a situation, otherwise so serious. Among such populations

as those of Alexandria and Constantinople, eager for discussion, with a curious avidity for problems of philosophy and religion, even the common people entered with gusto into the Nicene struggle. The picture drawn by Gregory of Nyssa undoubtedly describes, perhaps with humorous exaggeration, what daily took place:

> Every corner and nook of the city is full of men who discuss incomprehensible subjects; the streets, the markets, the people who sell old clothes, those who sit at the tables of the money changers, those who deal in provisions. Ask a man how many *oboli* it comes to, he gives you a specimen of dogmatising on generated and ungenerated being. Inquire the price of bread, you are answered the Father is greater than the Son and the Son subordinate to the Father. Ask if the bath is ready, and you are answered, The Son of God was created from nothing.

II

It is against the situation thus sketched that we have now to estimate the greatness of Athanasius as a Christian; the worth, in some respects the limitations, of his example as a controversialist. Clearly in his mind the Incarnation itself was at stake. With that, for him, was bound up the Redemption and the whole body of the New Testament truth concerning Salvation. As he wrote from Treves to the Egyptian bishops, "We are contending for our all." Farrar is right when he says, "Nothing can be more frivolous and superficial than the attempt to represent the whole dispute as simply *verbal*." Gibbon is quite at one with his usual tone when he insinuates that the Greek words

chosen to express the difference between the contenders involved only "the difference of a single diphthong." Such an assertion, he says, "would be ridiculous only if it were possible to mark any real and sensible distinction between the Homo*o*usians and the Homo*i*ousians." To Athanasius the difference was worlds away from being such a triviality.

Arius had started the controversy by asserting that the Son was a "creature"; that "there was a time when he was not"; that he was "created out of nothing" before the world was created. If God, at all, he was a sort of secondary God, of a different substance from the Father, his creator. Neander quotes as one of the sentences of Arius the words, "Having determined to create us, God created a certain being whom he named Logos, Wisdom, Son, in order to create us by him." The principal work by Arius was titled *Thaleia,* that is the Banquet. It is described, from the fragments of it that remain, as popular in form, half prose, half sing-song verse, adapted to catch the attention of the unthinking masses and thus to give a vogue to his views. All of which seems to justify the use by Sylvester Horne of the caustic phrase "the curiously flabby mind of Arius." In such ways Arius "gained a notoriety far outstripping his talents and learning." But his greater contemporaries—Eusebius of Cæsarea and Eusebius of Nicomedia, men of larger learning and keener intellect—saw deeper into the problem. It was they and such as they who are known as the Homoiousians. They declined to allow

that the Son was of *one* essence with the Father and therefore his coequal. He was subordinate and of *like* essence only. In both Arianism and semi-Arianism, Athanasius believed there was a dangerous reversion toward Pagan polytheism and a virtual denial of the unity of the Godhead; a thrust against the whole of the revealed system of truth and salvation. He was not contending for any merely speculative formula, but for "the rightful honor of Jesus"; his right to such homage and worship as are due to God alone. The faith of Athanasius was more than an intellectual conviction, the result of a process of reasoning. It was the fruit of a deep personal experience of what Jesus as Lord and Friend can be to the soul. De Broglie only states the fact when he says that Athanasius "was inflamed from his youth with the passion which makes saints—the love of Jesus Christ." To the presbyters of Alexandria he wrote urging them to take up the apostle's words "nothing shall separate us from the love of Christ." Like Wesley long after him, he cherished "the lovable name of our Lord." He drew his faith from the New Testament. We know from one of his writings that his list of New Testament Scriptures corresponded to that in our Bibles. It gives one a sense of the native simplicity that lay behind all his reasoned dialectic to find him saying, "The Catholic faith is that which the Lord gave, the apostles preached, and the fathers have preserved." With Ephrem Syrus, doubtless he also looked back, sometimes, sighing for the earlier

days of undisturbed peace in the church. "Happy they," said Ephrem, "who know how difficult it is to understand, how sweet to praise Thee; happy he who has not tasted the wisdom of the Greeks, nor lost the simplicity of the Apostles." According to Gibbon, Athanasius in writing to monks,

> candidly confessed that whenever he forced his understanding to meditate on the divinity of the Logos his toilsome and unavailing efforts recoiled on themselves; the more he thought the less he comprehended; the more he wrote the less capable was he of expressing his thoughts.

But it was never so when he read his New Testament. Then his heart became theologian and awakened his conscience, which was ever a spur in his flank, urging him on to fresh effort in defense of his faith, thus founded. The sincerity and candor of his conduct in controversy are undeniable. He would have only honest methods; such arguments as he conscientiously felt accorded with truth. Heat there was in his "fulminating eloquence," but always light as well, and, at the point of danger, restraint. It has been charged against Tertullian that in the heat and vehemence of his swift rhetoric "he improvised his convictions." That charge does not lie against Athanasius. But there is one that does: Courtesy no less than conviction is required, if controversy is to be called Christian. It is undeniable that Athanasius was at times an offender in this. Stung by the wrongs that were done him and the false accusations that were lodged against him, he can be fierce in reply. There

is more heat than sweetness in some of his utterances. His readiness in coining derisive names for his foes is more a credit to his verbal fluency than to his brotherly spirit. Newman searched his writings and selected a group of his contemptuous invectives. At various times he called his Arian foes, "Maniacs, devils, Anti-Christs, Jews, polytheists, atheists, dogs, wolves, lions, hares, chameleons, hydras, eels, cuttle-fish, gnats, beetles, leeches." It was an age when such tactics were common. Athanasius himself had suffered from many a vile tongue. He had been called by an emperor, sneering at his want of stature, "a manikin, not a man." He had been denounced as a "madman," a "meddling demagogue," an "audacious conspirator," "the odious Athanasius." To our own day, men, otherwise good and gracious enough, persist in attempting to discredit their opponents in controversy by opprobrious epithets, by alleging motives that are mean and low, by caricaturing their position, by ridiculing rather than answering their arguments. Honest and good-natured humor is a genial breeze blowing over a controversy, but the shallow laugh, easily raised against an opponent, and meant to be, what it is, the crackling of thorns, is contemptible. That such methods are retaliative is no justification of their use. But, some one will object, was not Jesus himself much engaged in controversy? Did he not denounce his adversaries? Where are to be found more withering, blazing characterizations, hot to blistering with scorn, than such as these: "fools

and blind," "generation of vipers," "whited sepulchers," "hypocrites," "children of the devil"? Yes! They came from his lips. But, not until he had made full proof of the utter and incorrigible insincerity of his opponents did he so scathingly arraign them for want of honesty, honor, and humanity; for their pettifogging scruples about little things, their amazing negligences of the larger, weightier matters of justice, benevolence, and love. We have to remember that he knew (as we do not) "what was in man"; that he judged those who sought his life, by their manifested character perfectly discerned by Him. All his woes upon them are concerned with unrighteous conduct, with specifications attached. He spoke not as a controversialist there; but as the Judge of men. Where and when did he deride or denounce men for their intellectual beliefs only? For men who have not his unerring insight, to plead his denunciations as a warrant for their own acrimonious railings against those who are only obnoxious because of differences of belief, is to confuse moral issues with mental processes.

In all fairness it must be said that denunciation was not a preferred indulgence with Athanasius. It was occasional rather than constant. He had a soft heart behind his hot zeal. He could treat even deserters from the ranks with consideration and tenderness. He could readily forgive the aged Hosious, who had presided at Nicea, for his defection under persecution, when he was approaching his hundredth year.

When he had to write against Appolinarius whom he had loved, he sturdily refuted his error but did not mention his name. It is to his even greater honor that he decried the use of force in religion. It is from the pen of this man, to whom Gibbon, qualifying his superabundant praise, imputed "a mind tainted by the contagion of fanaticism," that we owe such golden sentences as these: "It is the character of true piety not to force but to convince, since our Lord himself forced no man, but left free the choice of each individual, saying to all, If any man *will,* let him come after me"; and again, "Truth is not preached by sword and javelin, nor by armies, but by persuasion and admonition"; and once more, "It is an evidence that men want confidence in their own faith, when they force and constrain others against their wills." There is one abatement of this praise that must be made. The man who could use such words sincerely enough, never seems to have gone the length they ought to have carried him. He never accorded to other men the *right* to differ from him. He was impatient of their refusal to accept his view. Their determined resistance to what he thought truth, seemed to him a sort of moral obliquity. Their hesitations he reckoned as obstinacy. He would not suffer, in the sphere of the highest fellowship, those who would not adopt the formula of Nicea. Arians, so far as his discipline extended, were excommunicated. The sceptical Frenchman, Montaigne, excelled him in this respect. That famous essayist could write,

"I exempt another as much as you please from being of my condition and principles, and consider him simply in himself, measuring him by his own model"; and again, "I *love* a man that doth stoutly express himself." Controversy is only noble when the contenders are "speaking truth in love." The "hate theological" is an offense to the Lord it supposes itself to serve. Jesus will have no fire descend upon the blameworthy heads of those who refuse to receive him. His word for it, those who think and practise otherwise know not "what manner of spirit they are of."

As we have taken our way through this troubled, yet stalwart, fourth-century career, we have been reminded of the storm and stress of our own times. We are living in an era of controversies renewed. Again the deity of Christ is questioned. Now even the Scriptures, on which Athanasius mainly rested his cause, are challenged as to their authority. New names designate fresh divergences. Fundamentalists attack Modernists; Creationists decry Evolutionists; Personal-liberty advocates abhor and seek to overthrow Prohibitionists; the League of Nations and the World Court divide men of opposite views; Socialists are aiming their weapons at Individualists; those who have not, look with jealous eyes at those who have. It is truly a lively mêlée into the midst of which you are going, young brethren, to take your part in the conflict of ideas. But a difference favorable to our own time over the days of old is discernible. The con-

flict is less embittered than of yore. Freedom to speak as one will, to believe as one is convinced, to worship as one prefers, are now and here assured to all, without danger of oppression, persecution, or peril of life. Excommunication for opinion's sake is rapidly growing rarer.

As we turn to ask, "What attitude toward current controversy shall the young minister take?" we have to remember that Athanasius was more an author and administrator than he was a preacher. Only some eighteen sermons of his have come down to us. Some of these are challenged as not by him. Preach he did, indeed, and often,

in the Cathedral at Alexandria, in the hermits' cave, in distant parts of Europe over which he traveled; but his reputation as a preacher would no doubt have been greater had his fame as a controversialist been less.

Shall the preacher of today, then, make his pulpit a fort from which to bombard theological and economic adversaries? It is perilous to do so. Polemical preaching is rarely effective. It changes few opinions; it oftener causes division and stirs up strife. But positive preaching is ever powerful. Hearers willingly listen to a reasoned discourse, or to an urgent, eloquent plea in behalf of an affirmative position. What they dislike is the substitution, in the pulpit, of a wrangler for a witness to the truth. Preach up the truth as you see it; in the long run of your ministry it will put down error more effectually than any frontal attack upon it. Annunciation, not denunciation, is your prin-

cipal business. You will not forget the courage and fearlessness of this "Valiant-for-Truth" of whom I have spoken. Fear God as you will, but never fear the face of man. Let not your pulpit become a coward's castle. It will, if you use it to vent your personal antipathies when there is no opportunity for a reply. It will, again, if you treat your truth and your hearers in a spirit of timidity. Never dodge your issue, nor modify your message to placate either the rich or the poor of your flock. Yet, remember that the alternative to cowardice is not foolhardiness. Courage and caution make good companions; each is a constant help to the other. He, whose very name is a symbol of his deathless influence, knew how to blend them in a ministry of surpassing power. So may you by the grace and help of God.

II

AMBROSE

(340–397)

PREACHING AND ADMINISTRATION

AMBROSE

I

MANY ministers, especially those with large churches, are in "a strait betwixt two"; not two worlds, but two spheres of duty. Between the claims of the pulpit and the demands of the parish they are hurried like a shuttle in a loom. Which of the two to make primary is a problem renewed every week. To neglect one for the sake of the other is a perennial temptation. Even so distinguished and conscientious a man as Alexander McLaren declined to concern himself with parish cares. To the end of a long ministry he kept his resolve, early formed, to concentrate all his powers on the pulpit. "I have limited myself to that work," he said. Such is neither a wise, nor a safe course for the majority of ministers.

The decision to give the church's office predominance over the preacher's study is equally unsound and fatal for most men. To each department of our official life applies the proverb, "This ought ye to have done and not to have left the other undone." These are not competing, but complemental, opportunities for service. Each brings something to the other. To pass from study to parish affairs gives freshness to the mind. The change is restful. To bring the "finds" of pastoral and administrative contacts into the pulpit tends to directness of speech and secures variety in the sermon. But if you shut yourself always in your

study behind bolted door, your entire devotion books and thoughts, you must not complain when your people apply to you that antique fribble, "Our minister is invisible all the week and incomprehensible on Sunday." Believe me, it is possible for a consecrated, industrious man, wisely ordering his life, scrupulously husbanding time, to make his ministry resemble a binary star, two orbs shining as one luminary; faithful study fitting him to preach at his best; watchful supervision and interested participation giving him a real leadership of the organized life of his parish. Every minister, if he fulfils the New Testament ideal for his calling, is both a bishop—that is an overseer—and a herald or ambassador of the truth. To be able to combine these two diverse activities in one whole of service, without irritation of spirit, is to reach the peak of efficiency. It is often done. It was done by Ambrose of Milan, in the fourth century, in a way so brilliant that his achievement is still regarded as monumental. For that reason we begin with an outline of his life.

He was born of noble ancestry and reared in a Christian home. Of his mother we know nothing. His father, who bore the same name, was Prefect of Gaul. The district he ruled included France, the Netherlands, Spain, and even Great Britain. His chief city was Treves. There, probably, his most distinguished son was born. The father died when Ambrose junior was thirteen years old. The family then removed to Rome. It included the mother, the

sister, Marcellina, who was about to become a nun, the brother Satyrus, and the lad Ambrose. Where he studied, under whom, and with what range of subjects, we are ignorant. Both he and his brother finally applied themselves diligently to the study of law, in which profession both became eminent early in their manhood. Ambrose then and always was remarkable for his proficiency in the Greek language and literature. The brilliant young advocate attracted the attention of Probus, the Prefect of Italy, a Christian senator and a man of principle. He and Ambrose were kindred spirits, much alike in dignity of character, sound judgment, and high aims. The older man made the brilliant young advocate his legal adviser, and though loath to part from him, he later appointed him *Consular* of Liguria and Aemilia, with headquarters at Milan, which then disputed with Rome the honor of being the chief city of Italy. When Probus sent him away to his new duties he said to him in words unconsciously prophetic, "Go, and conduct yourself not as a judge but as a bishop."

Some time after his entrance upon the administrative and judicial functions of this new post, Auxentius, the Arian bishop of the diocese, died. The choice of a successor brought on a bitter struggle. The orthodox party was determined that no Arian should succeed to the office. The day of the election a tumult arose in the church. Ambrose, as his duty required, came into the assembly to demand order. In an address he sought to calm the excitement and secure a

fair election. Suddenly a voice rang through the church—some said it was a child's shrill tone—"Ambrose for Bishop." Immediately the cry was taken up by both parties in the electorate, and Ambrose was chosen enthusiastically for the position. It was a strange, a romantic decision. Ambrose, a lawyer and judge, thirty-four years old, a Christian indeed, but only a catechumen, not yet baptized, suddenly thrust, by popular demand, into the high office of bishop of the second diocese in importance in the Western Empire! What a tribute to the magnetic personality of the man! Brief as had been their experience of his rule, he had won the people he governed to such confidence in him as this choice indicated, by the justice, ability, and force of his administration; by the weight, the dignity, the charm of his character. He, surely, was a Roman of the old type, solid, substantial, noble; transfigured by his faith to be a new man in Christ. Doctrinal antagonists hushed their strife before him; each party, doubtless, hoping to gain advantage by his election. If the Arians had known better his attitude toward their creed and could have foreseen his intense hostility to them, they would never have supported him. Many like transfers from secular to churchly duty have been made in later ages, by ways less sudden and sensational; but never one more clearly justified by the event, as providential. The Church gained much in the spheres of doctrine and practise during the episcopate of Ambrose. To him, chiefly, she owes the conversion of one of her

greatest theologians. To him, largely, was due the final suppression of Arianism in the West. To him she is indebted for a long stride forward toward independence in her relations with the State. He had more than a little to do with the final overthrow of the pagan religion as an influential force in the Empire; it was his letter to the Emperor Theodosius that frustrated the efforts of Symmachus and other devotees of the old religion to revive its expiring influence, by the restoration, in Rome, of the Altar of Victory and the worship that centered thereat.

At first, Ambrose would have none of it all. He knew what dangers would beset his paths; what self-denials would be necessary, what cares would await him, what labors unceasing would be involved. So he sought escape by strange devices, some of them of questionable honesty, if we may believe his contemporary and biographer, Paulinus, addicted to recording, if not to inventing, things freakish and marvelous. According to him, Ambrose even went so far as to introduce prostitutes into his house that the people might think him unfit by such impairment of his sanctity. The only effect upon the determined people was to lead them to cry out, "Thy sin be upon us." They knew him too well to be deceived by such a ruse. As a last resort, he tried flight. But all was in vain. The persistent demand of the people and his own conscience finally constrained him to yield. He was baptized, insisting upon an orthodox administrator—a first shock to the Arians; was rushed through

the required preliminary stages of the ministry, and eight days after his election was consecrated. He became, almost immediately, "the most commanding public character and the most influential man of his time" in the Western Empire. He continued in the office until his death on Good Friday of April, 397; in the fifty-seventh year of his age and the twenty-third of his episcopate.

II

We pass on, now, to refer to a few of the outstanding events in his life, and to some of the suggestive instances of his capabilities, so far as they are related to the practical aims of these lectures.

His first acts after his ordination were personal. He began at once to set his own house in order. He gave to the poor all his ready money. His other property he transferred to his brother, Satyrus, who left an important official position under government to assume the management of it. He made a provision for the support of his sister, Marcellina, who had taken the vows of a virgin's life. None of the three had ever married; celibacy was a family trait. One of the features of the teaching of Ambrose with which our age has least sympathy is his urgency for the virgin and the ascetic life. His first writings are concerned with the subject. The act of Marcellina in becoming a nun and the celibacy of Satyrus were in accord with his own tendencies. He discouraged second marriage for widows. So stirring were his

pleas for perpetual virginity that mothers are said to have shut up their daughters in the house to keep them from hearing, and yielding to, his entreaties from the pulpit. In our recoil from this earliest of his regrettable enthusiasms we must not fail to set store by his example in so ordering his affairs as to leave himself quite free to devote all his energies and the whole of his time to his new duties as bishop.

Every minister is bound by New Testament precept to "rule well his own household." He is under no obligation to voluntary poverty, such as Ambrose practised. Indeed, the churches, in their parsimony and want of heart, are likely, to their shame, to see to that for him. "Lord, keep him humble and we will keep him poor" is often, apparently, their unsanctified desire and resolve. As to children, Ambrose had none, and so lavished his love upon a brother and a sister. But most ministers have them, and Paul expected (if it is his counsel we get in the Pastoral Epistles) that the children of "presbyters" should be "believing children not accused of riot and insubordination." Their father should be "a man who keeps his children ever under control and thoroughly well behaved. For if a man does not know how to rule his own household, how shall he take charge of a church of God?" Such watch-care and supervision in the parsonage is the common practise. But there are exceptions so gross as to have originated the slanders that ministers' children are ill-mannered, because ill-managed, and that the sons of the manse,

especially, come to no good. As the son of a father in the ministry, who first gave me to God and then to his service in the gospel, I, with a multitude of like experience, resent the calumny. Statistics prove it false. In New York, recently, at a gathering of notable men of worth and position, a fraternal organization was formed; every member of it, four hundred in number it is said, the successful son of a Methodist minister.

Ambrose, though he made no objection to the marriage of his subordinates, had no wife of his own; but most ministers have one, and are ready to say of her that which Alexander McLaren said of his, in a letter to Robertson Nicoll:

> I would fain that in any notices of what I am, or have been able to do, it should be told that the best part of it all came and comes from her . . . She was my guide, my inspirer, my corrector, my reward. Of all human formative influences on my character and life, hers is the strongest.

The more true this is, in any case, the greater the obligation of the husband to shield the mistress of his household from undue demands of the parish, upon her time and strength. If you will permit an old fogy to say so, in this day of the emancipation and universal activity of women, the minister's wife is not a copastor, but chiefly a home-maker for the man, who is to give the whole of himself to a severely strenuous and exhausting work. So many wives of clerics these days are tied to so many church organizations, local and national, that they have neither the time, nor

the inclination, for such intellectual and spiritual fellowships in the home as offer them their richest opportunity for service. Let the man of God, in the administration of his own affairs, see to it that his household partner is not overburdened with such outside tasks.

What about the ministerial purse? I have already alluded to the first act of Ambrose in dispossessing himself. I have said that the minister is not so obligated; suggesting, also, that the purse of his household is not likely to be full, at any time. But some income every minister has, and money—his use of it and his attitude toward it—is a crucial test of both his character and his ability in affairs. On this subject Ambrose had much to say, and his practise always matched his precepts. One of his most interesting works for preachers is his treatise on "Duties of Ministers," in three books, modeled upon Cicero's *De Officiis*. The formlessness of it; its want of anything like a systematic arrangement of a Christian minister's ethical standards of conduct, detracts from its value in our eyes. It is evidently a rearrangement of free talks to his clergy. It is full of kindly feeling toward subordinates, and so does much to explain their affection for him and his rule. It has some golden words about clerical friendships; about a close mouth, wisdom, modesty, prudence, temperance, liberality, and almsgiving. But what strikes one most is his repetitious insistence upon the lure and danger of money for ministers. Such epigrammatic warnings

as these are scattered here and there through the three books:

> We ought to avoid the love of money . . . nor be inflamed by an avaricious heart . . . let love of money be destroyed. . . . Love of money is an old and ancient vice [with examples of the fact, all gathered from the Old Testament] . . . Love of money is deadly, it defiles those who have it and helps not those who have it not. . . . He that rules over free men should never be greedy of money. . . . The rule of economy and the authority of self-restraint befit all.

These are not paraphrases but exact translations of his sharp, incisive words. Elsewhere he draws swift, humorous pictures of the woes of the money-borrower and sarcastically denounces the sharp practises of the money-lender. He is specially mordant and merry about misers; he tells of one who being served an egg, complained that a chicken was being killed. Usurers, spendthrifts, men who cornered the grain market to raise the price of food, all came under his lash. All of which is in strict accord with the precepts and example of Christ. Recall, once more, the Pastoral Epistles. What stern and urgent advice to ministers is given there on this subject! We are not to be "lovers of money" nor "greedy of filthy lucre." We are warned against "teaching for filthy lucre's sake what we ought not to teach." We may not regard "godliness as a source of gain." If we have food and shelter, we are urged "to be content" with that. Solemn is the saying, "They who desire to be rich fall into the snares of temptation. . . For the love of money is a source of all kinds of evil, and in their eager desire

to be rich some have been led astray from the faith and have pierced themselves with many sorrows." Ambrose in his attitude toward money was founded solidly upon the New Testament. It was our rich Lord who had become poor, who called money "the mammon of unrighteousness," and thought of it only as an instrument of service. Let none suppose, therefore, that I labor the subject unduly. Men in our highest pulpits have been known to fall into obscurity and uselessness, covetously sinning against these precepts. At least one high official of our churches has been known to send trust funds into Wall Street for speculative purposes. Far more than in the case of ordinary men, for men of our calling speculation in stocks, or grain, or real estate is a betrayal of Christ and a departure from righteousness. To be dickerers about salary and covetous of more; not to live within our income, however small, lowers our standing before God and man. To "owe any man anything but love" is forbidden *us,* especially. Polonius may have been the old sleaze Hamlet thought him, but his advice to Laertes is sound counsel for ministers, "Neither a borrower nor a lender be." Lend neither your money nor your name, nor become surety for any man, if you would escape sorrowful entanglements.

Returning to the time of his election, let us learn how Ambrose ordered his work and disposed his time within his house. Let him first describe his embarrassment as he faced the new duties so suddenly thrust upon him:

> Hurried as I was from the seat of judgment and the head-gear of a magistrate, to the priesthood, I began to teach you what I had not myself learnt. So it came about that I began to teach before I began to learn; and I have to learn and teach at the same time, because I had not had time to learn before.

But Ambrose soon changed all that. By diligence and industry he made himself master of the Scriptures and of the theological literature of his time, particularly that of the Greek Fathers. He began at once, not only to preach frequently, but to write what he had preached in rearranged form and to originate unpreached material, both to be spread abroad in his diocese and elsewhere. He is voluminous among the divines of his age. I count in a list of his acknowledged works, still extant, some forty titles. Twenty, or more, besides, are attributed to him on doubtful authority. The Benedictine Editors of his works have included ninety-one letters which throw no little light on events of his life and his times. In their style they are cold and formal, but they are great letters for all that. Evidently, he brought to his study and his pulpit the same indomitable energy and constancy that he gave to diocesan and imperial affairs.

It is said of him, " He studied in order to teach, and he taught in order to edification." He has few flights of such eloquence as that of Chrysostom. But fluency, earnestness, and a steady drive at the practical, characterize both his preaching and writing. Even when he is treating doctrine he never leaves practise out. In all my study of him I have been reminded, at every

step, of R. W. Dale, of Birmingham. The same gravity of tone and personality, of substance of thought, of liking for doctrine, of fondness for reasoned discourse, and the same type of influence on public affairs are found in each of them. In their ways of interpreting Scripture they are far apart: Ambrose an allegorist of Origen's School; Dale a literalist, who sticks to the plain sense of the text. I think not of differing beliefs, but of personality only.

Ambrose celebrated the Eucharist daily. He preached on Sunday in the Basilica and occasionally on a week-day; on the great festivals always.

How was he able to meet so many and so arduous engagements? For answer let us turn to the famous "Confessions" of Augustine. To have guided that perplexed soul into the light and with his own hands to have baptized him, is one of the glories of the ministry of Ambrose. But how did Augustine, a North African, come to be in Milan? He had been teaching rhetoric in Rome. Symmachus (the same who would have restored the Altar of Victory) procured for him a position to teach his subject in the Northern capital. Let Augustine speak for himself as to the preaching of Ambrose:

To Milan I came, to Ambrose the Bishop, known to the whole world as among the best of men, Thy devout servant; whose eloquent discourse did then plentifully dispense unto Thy people the flour of Thy wheat. . . To him was I unknowingly led by Thee, that by him I might be knowingly led to Thee. This man of God received me as a father, and showed me an episcopal kindness on my coming. Thenceforth I began to love him, at

first indeed not as a teacher of the truth (which I utterly despaired of in Thy Church) but as a person kind toward myself. And I listened diligently to him preaching to the people, not with that intent I ought, but, as it were, trying his eloquence, whether it answered the fame thereof, or flowed fuller or lower than was reported. I hung on his words attentively; but of the matter I was as a careless and scornful looker-on. . . I was delighted with the sweetness of his discourse, more recondite, yet in manner less winning and harmonious, than that of Faustus. Of the matter however there was no comparison; for the one was wandering amid Manichean delusions, the other teaching salvation most soundly. . . While I opened my heart to admit "how eloquently he spake," there also entered "how truly he spake"; but this by degrees.

In the next book of the "Confessions" Augustine gives this account of his attempt, at the palace of the Archbishop, to interview him:

He did not know the tides of my feelings or the abyss of my danger. For I could not ask him what I would as I would, being shut out both from his ear and speech by multitudes of busy people, whose weaknesses he served. With whom when he was not taken up (which was but a little time) he was either refreshing his body with the sustenance absolutely necessary, or his mind with reading. But when he was reading, his eye glided over his pages, and his heart searched out the sense, but his voice and tongue were at rest. Ofttimes when we had come (for no man was forbidden to enter, nor was it his wont that any who came should be announced to him) we saw him thus reading to himself, and having long sat silent (for who durst intrude on one so intent?) we were fain to depart, conjecturing that in the small interval, which he obtained, free from the din of others' business, for the recruiting of his mind, he was loath to be taken off.

How vivid these pictures of Ambrose in pulpit and study!

From other sources of information, we know that he spent much of the night in devotion, study, and writing. He wrote with his own hand, declining to rob a secretary of sleep, to help him.

This was how Ambrose managed it all: by industry that never tired; by snatching intervals of time between business and visitors for reading and study; by spending part of his nights, to eke out the scattered intervals of his day, in reading and writing. Over against so great an example of absorbed devotion to both spheres of the Christian ministry, let me put those ringing words that Alexander Whyte flung out, in his fervid, almost angry, address on "Efficiency":

> I would have laziness held to be the one unpardonable sin, in all our students and in all our ministers. . . I would have all lazy students drummed out of college and all lazy ministers out of the Assembly.

A year, or more ago, an article, in a magazine of wide circulation, was headed "Are Ministers Molly-coddles?" The writer furnished much evidence that some ministers are "men who coddle themselves." I was reminded as I read, of George Eliot's sarcasm in "Scenes from Clerical Life," "A gently complaining and fatigued spirit is that in which evangelical divines are apt to pass their days." Let Ambrose stir you up to be "a *workman* needing not to be ashamed."

By virtue of his position, Ambrose was brought into relations with all classes and conditions of men. Those dedicated to the ascetic life, and those engaged in secular pursuits, were in consultation with him.

The poor made to him their constant appeals. He was never known to disregard them. His words to almoners are marked by a wisdom that might make modern dispensers of charity less sure that their methods, requiring investigation, and looking to the inculcation of self-respect among the poor, are as novel and original as they seem to suppose. Almsgiving, says Ambrose, should be as abundant as the real need; but with discrimination against parasites. His words about "rounders" are as if our experience of such were his.

> Never [he says] was the greed of beggars greater than now. With pleas from their rags and lies about their lives they are ever asking for further money. . . Let there be method in giving that the poor may not go away empty, nor the subsistence of the needy become the spoil of the dishonest.

Ambrose kept his eye, for audit, upon the poor fund of the church.

He had, also, great sympathy with prisoners, and captives taken in war. He got the Arians about his ears, ever on the lookout for ground of complaint against him, by melting up and selling the gold vessels of the sanctuary, in order to be able to ransom large numbers of such captives, taken in a recent war. His sacramental views were high and the vessels sacred in his sight because of their holy uses. But this is his challenge to those who complained of his act: "If the blood of Christ redeemed men's souls, should not the vessels which hold that blood redeem their bodies?"

The rich and extravagant, on the contrary, were oftener the objects of his rebukes for their extravagances, than his caresses for their high estate. They rarely had his conversation at their tables. He liked not feasts. Scattered through his various works are references to saloons with sculptured walls, to marble pavements; to the spilled wine, the fish-bones, and faded flowers that were the débris of their banquets, on the floor; to absinthe bitters, and rare desserts; to fowls stuffed with oysters, ivory couches, and droves of slaves; to money frittered away on silks and jewels.

To his own clergy he was tender and affectionate. He calls them his children, his sons, his brethren. There was no lordliness in his tone or carriage toward them. The real spirit of humility in him is revealed in words about himself found in the treatise "On Penitence":

> Keep him whom thou hast deigned to redeem. For it will be said, See how he, not nurtured in the church's bosom, not trained from boyhood, but hurried from the tribunal, snatched from the vanities of this world, made familiar with the chorister's hymn instead of the court crier's voice, remains in the priesthood, not by his own goodness, but by the grace of Christ. . . Preserve, O Lord, that gift of Thine which Thou didst bestow upon me, though I fled from it. For I knew I was not worthy to be called a bishop, because I had given myself to this world; but by Thy grace I am what I am.

The crucial test of his manhood came in his dealing with Imperial personalities. For the youthful Emperor Gratian, who loved him, he wrote at his re-

quest two of his treatises, one on "The Faith," another on "The Holy Spirit." Ambrose loved him as a father; and mourned exceedingly for his untimely and violent death. To the contrary, the royal mother, Justina, and her son Valentinian II, for whom she was Regent, being Arian in faith and affiliation, were his bitter opposers; who, if they could, would have been glad to drive him from office. They did issue an edict banishing him, which Ambrose defiantly disregarded. But when they needed an ambassador to the revolutionary Maximus, who had already seized Gaul, they twice had to summon Ambrose and send him to the usurper's camp. The first time he succeeded in averting the invasion. The second time his political errand failed, Maximus swept into Italy, and the mother and her son had to fly for their lives to the shelter of Theodosius, at Thessalonica. It was Justina who, before these events, had precipitated one of the critical hours in the life of Ambrose. She demanded first one, then another of the great churches of Milan that it might be devoted exclusively to Arian worship; to be owned and entirely controlled by that party. Ambrose first flatly refused the request. When they sent troops to seize the church, Ambrose faced the Gothic soldiery, who felt the force of his personality, and, disobeying their orders, withdrew before him. Their meek submission was like that of a rough general who had said: "Ambrose came into my camp and spoke words, and I gave up my brutal purposes. I know not why."

Fearing their return, Ambrose and his devoted adherents filled the church, barred all its entrances, kept up a continuous service of worship, day and night, until Justina gave up the struggle. The young Emperor Valentinian berated the barbarian soldiers who had failed them saying, "If Ambrose told you to seize me you would put me in chains."

Then it was that Ambrose, to cheer and content the crowd of worshipers in the church they guarded, introduced the antiphonal singing of psalms and hymns, some of the latter composed by himself. Certainly four, possibly twelve, of the hymns attributed to him, numbering a hundred or more, were written by him and used in the worship of his time. Augustine in his "Confessions" has a most touching and interesting reference to those excited days, in these words:

> The devout people kept watch in the church, ready to die with their Bishop, Thy servant. Then it was first instituted that, after the manner of the Eastern Churches, Hymns and Psalms should be sung, lest the people should wax faint through the tediousness of sorrow, and from that day to this the custom is retained. . . How I did weep in Thy hymns and Canticles, touched to the quick by the Voice of Thy sweet attuned church!

Do we, brethren, give that attention to the musical service in our worship that we should? Is the organist our friend? Are the choir folk near enough to us in the fellowship of worship to lead us to confer with them as to its betterment? The Episcopalian rector prays with his choir before and after service. Was that ever done by a Baptist minister? Have we the interest in congregational singing we ought to have,

and is our choice of hymns carefully designed to encourage it? You think these, perhaps, the minor and negligible elements of a service; but as Michelangelo said, "Trifles make perfection, and perfection is no trifle." Mr. Beecher, in Plymouth Church, knew how to make congregational singing a *major* feature of worship, there.

I have left to the last that momentous day in the life of Ambrose, when meeting the great Theodosius at the door of his basilica, he refused him entrance and denied him access to the table of the Lord. Theodosius had sent to Thessalonica an edict summoning the people to the theater, because they had (not without irritating and scandalous provocation) killed some of his military officers. When the place was crowded to the doors, the armed soldiery, acting under orders emanating from Theodosius, rushed upon the people. Seven thousand it is said were slain, women and children among them. The Empire was horrified at the slaughter. Ambrose was all but broken-hearted, for he loved Theodosius, and the affection was reciprocated. Such fits of blazing anger uncontrolled were but occasional; at heart Theodosius was noble. He said near the end of his life, "I have known no bishop but Ambrose." When, then, the Emperor presented himself for worship at the basilica, Ambrose, who had already rebuked him in a letter, tender but terrible, went hurriedly in full sacerdotal attire, to meet him with such words as these:

How will you dare to plant your feet in the sanctuary and elevate your hands toward the Creator of all things, all dripping as they are with the blood of men unjustly slain? How will you dare take into your hands the sacred body of the Lord, or put His precious blood to those lips, which by a word of anger have spilt the blood of so many innocent victims? Withdraw, then, and add not a fresh crime to those with which you are already burdened.

For eight months the Emperor, penitent indeed, but proud, never entered the church, nor saw the face of Ambrose. But, at Christmas, his stout spirit yielded. He came to the church, divested himself of his royal trappings, yielded to the demand of Ambrose for a public penance and confession. Kneeling there in the midst of the great congregation he bowed himself before God, and cried aloud for pardon. Then Ambrose administered to him the sacrament.

It will never be our lot as ministers of the New Testament to come into such situations. Emperors and savage soldiers, with their generals as fierce as they, we are not called to confront. But we have to meet men, some of them stronger and wiser than ourselves, who are the officials of the churches we are to serve. Not all of them are of the sort I describe. Some are weak, opinionated, self-willed. They will oppose our plans, thwart our ministry, seek to alienate our helpers. " When a minister who wants to run a church meets a man who wants to run it too, look out for squalls." We are warned, again, in our Pastoral Epistles, against " self-will and quick temper "; against " brawling " and the like. But in the same

letters we are told that it will be duty sometimes to "rebuke, reprove, and exhort." That is the hour when we need most of Christ's Spirit, and that righteous sort of courage Ambrose displayed. But there will come other times when we must agree with William Pitt that "patience is the prime quality of a statesman"; other times, still, when we must follow that counsel, so surprising coming from the lips of the iron-willed Puritan, Oliver Cromwell, "In yielding there is wisdom." To your trustees you will be wise to act as an adviser only. The minister who seeks a place on the board of his church corporation is in for trouble. With your deacons you will be brotherly and confidential. They are your cabinet. Make your meetings with them prayerful, yet cheerful. Deacons have been humorously classed as long-horned and short-horned. I have known only the hornless variety. Some wag asserted: "Resist the devil, he will flee from you; resist the deacons, they will fly at you." If you love and trust them they will not gore you. You ought to be the teacher of your Sunday-school teachers; in close touch with all the educational and missionary subordinates in your parish; the big brother of your boys and the pastoral friend of every soul under your charge. Find time to know your people as individuals and in their homes. If there are any who are not agreeable to you, whose traits you do not like, with whom it is not easy to be companionable, love them above all the rest. It will be a means of grace both to them and you.

Among his many other activities Ambrose built a great church edifice. It was known for long years as the Ambrosian Basilica. In his funeral sermon, for his loved brother Satyrus, who had died through serving Ambrose, the archbishop with tears in his voice thus appeals to his departed otherself: "I call thy holy soul to witness that in the building of the church, I often feared that I might displease thee." How suggestive of the frictions such an enterprise may cause! A new "church" has often meant "a new minister" because of them. The one Ambrose built stood where he planted it, for long years. But in the twelfth century, having fallen into ruin, it was displaced by another, on the same site. That church still stands. Its wooden doors are said to be those of the ancient edifice. Within its crypt, in a great silver reliquary of modern times, lie the bones of Ambrose. The sarcophagus was opened, and the relics declared to be genuine in 1873. If you are ever in Milan, go to the Church of San Ambrogio; stand by that tomb, which unites the fourth century to ours; pray there that you may be, in your less conspicuous ministry, in spirit and action, such a man as the immortal Ambrose.

III

CHRYSOSTOM

(347–407)

PREACHING AND ELOQUENCE

CHRYSOSTOM

I

The Syrian Antioch of the fourth century was an arable soil for the Christian preacher. The city was beautiful for situation; its valley watered by the Orontes, and hemmed by hills. Art and architecture had joined hands to make it imposing and splendid. Its suburb of Daphne was renowned throughout the empire for the loveliness of its Grove and the passionate indulgences it sheltered. The town itself was a busy place; vitality and energy throbbed in its streets. It was a mart of commerce, a center for scholars, a capital where rich men loved to dwell; a place where artizans found ready employ; where the poor suffered and often begged; where actors and charioteers found constant chance to display their skill in the theater and the circus. The population of two hundred thousand was of many strains. Greeks and Romans, Jews and Christians, Syrians and other Asiatics, met and mingled in the city's life. To its harbor, a few miles away, on the Mediterranean, came ships and sailors from many lands, to add, occasionally, to the complexity and the variety of its crowded thoroughfare.

The pagan temple and the Christian Basilica were near neighbors. One hundred thousand Christians lived and worshiped within the walls; well aware that the one-time nick-name (there first conferred) had now become a badge of distinction and honor. The

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non-Christian population was superstitious, excitable, easily inflamed, devoted overmuch to pleasure and no less to sensuality. Antioch, in other parts of the Empire, was notorious for immorality and a love of oratory.

When, in such a city, a man with the gifts of John of the golden mouth, a native son, bred in one of its Christian homes, educated in its schools, familiar with every phase of its life, of good repute as a pleader in its courts, but known lately as an ascetic and hermit, begins to preach, in the great church, the precepts, the promises, and the hopes of the Christian gospel, then eloquence and a crowd are assured.

II

For the practical purpose now in hand a brief of Chrysostom's career is necessary. As to his name; in his own age, it was simply John. Nearly two centuries elapsed before he began to be called Chrysostom —the only name by which most know him. He was born in 347. He lived sixty years. His father was a military officer of high rank who died when his son was a child of three. The mother, Anchusa, though still young, refused to marry again. She devoted herself exclusively to her son and his future. There was between them the tenderest love. One of the most beautiful and pathetic passages in John's early treatise on "The Priesthood" relates to their mutual affection. Anchusa was a woman of ardent piety; chaste, beautiful, devoted to Christ, the Scripture, and the

Church. She reared her son on the Word of God and on prayer. It was she who won from Libanius, a pagan, the tribute: "Heavens! What women these Christians have." It was under this Libanius, a man of note everywhere, in that age, a teacher of literature, rhetoric, and philosophy, a friend of three successive emperors, and a stout defender of the old religion as against the new, that John received his education in these subjects. So swift to learn, so skilled in rhetoric did John become, so much a favorite was the young Christian with the old pagan that when they asked the Master, on his death-bed, who should succeed him, he replied, "It would have been John if the Christians had not stolen him from us."

With what for those days was a liberal education John entered upon the practise of law. He was a successful pleader from the start. A brilliant worldly future seemed opening. But the courts and their litigations were not to his mind. He saw corruption, trickery, and fraud so prevalent that his soul revolted. To succeed and rise he must practise the same. He declined to stain his soul and retired from the public scene. His wish was to enter a monastery. With tears and entreaties his mother pleaded against being left alone. He became instead a monk at home. Eventually (possibly Anchusa was then dead) he carried out his intention. For nearly ten years he lived as a monk. Part of the time was spent in the monastery, in fellowship with other devotees; part of it as a solitary, in a hut. He lived on the plainest food and

none too much of it, thereby laying the foundation for a lifelong dyspepsia. He seems to have deserted now the classics for the Scriptures and to have spent his time chiefly in their study, and in prayer. In this period he was under the tutelage of one Diodorus, who influenced him to take the Scriptures only in their historical and plain sense. This became the rule of his ministry and gives his exegesis its permanent value. His expository discourses are often quoted even now.

When his health failed he had to give up the ascetic life. Meletius the bishop appointed him deacon. He was then thirty-five years old. He spent five years ministering to the poor, rendering also various services to the church and the bishop. He did not as yet open his lips to preach. Flavian having succeeded to the bishopric, impressed by his reputation as a speaker, ordained him presbyter and made him at forty years of age the chief preacher in the great church. He continued to exercise this function for twelve years. He preached twice a week regularly; once in an emergency of the city's life, daily, for more than twenty days. Many hundreds of his sermons have come down to us. It was in Antioch that his best work in the pulpit was done; there his reputation for brilliant eloquence was made. The fame of his power and grace as a preacher spread quickly. It has persisted to this day. Good judges, experts in the history of preaching, esteem him first among the great men of the pulpit, in all the church's history.

In 398, Eutropius, chief minister of the Emperor Arcadius, coveted the gifts of Chrysostom for the Capital. The archbishopric of Constantinople was vacant. He determined that John of Antioch should fill it. Fearing an uprising of the excitable Antiochenes, if the change was made openly, he raped him from the city by a stratagem, hurried him under guard to the Capital and, against his vehement protests, inducted him, after ordination, as the Patriarch of the Eastern Church. It was a stormy six years that he spent in this office. The imperial court was corrupt and licentious. The Emperor Arcadius was little more than a puppet in the hands of his wife and his ministers. The chief of these latter was Eutropius, a scheming scoundrel, a eunuch who had been a slave, but had by infamous ways risen to be the chief figure in the state, next to the Cæsar himself. The Empress, Eudoxia, was a vain, superstitious woman; a lover of pleasure, unchaste, yet, by her self-assertion, a power behind the throne. The clergy were many of them indolent, avaricious, flatterers of the Empress, and unfaithful to the high ideals of their calling. Into this atmosphere, fetid in his nostrils, Chrysostom brought his ascetic ideals and his stern demands for Christian purity. The people were immediately captivated by his eloquence and attached themselves to him devotedly. At first, for the same reason, he was in favor at Court; but not for long. He sold many treasures accumulated by his luxury-loving predecessor in the bishop's house, and gave the proceeds to

the poor. He lived retired and ate alone. He refused to be a diner-out among the rich. He was a rigid disciplinarian with his presbyters. On a single visitation-tour he deposed thirteen ecclesiastics whom he deemed unworthy. He opened all the batteries of his eloquence upon the evils around him—inordinate luxury, and neglect of the poor, indulgence of the passions, greed and simony. Antagonism of court and clergy soon became intense against him. His downfall was sought. Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, jealous and mean of spirit, found a pretext against him, demanding that he be tried before a synod, for interfering with his discipline against certain monks who had fled to Constantinople, appealed to John, and were treated by him with kindness. The appeal Chrysostom made to Theophilus for clemency in the case, was scorned; the Emperor was still urged to proceed against him, and was given no peace till he called the Synod, which summoned Chrysostom to answer. He refused to appear unless his known enemies were eliminated. He was condemned without a hearing, and a decree of banishment was issued. It was only partially made effective, when the people arose in angry protest. A riot seemed imminent. A timely earthquake occurred. The spirit of the superstitious Eudoxia wilted; at her urgency the banished was recalled. He was received in triumph. The Bosporus was crowded with boats to meet him. The city was decked in his honor. By an eager multitude he was reinstated on his throne; at whose demand he de-

livered, impromptu, one of his ecstatic and brilliant addresses:

> What shall I say [he begins] or how shall I speak? "Blessed be God." So spoke I when I departed, and I utter the same again; yea, even in my exile I did not cease to say these words. . . Blessed be the name of the Lord forever. Our lot varies, but our manner of giving glory is one. I gave thanks when I was expelled, I give thanks when I return. The conditions of summer and winter are different, but the end is one—the prosperity of the field. Blessed be God who permitted the storm, blessed be God who has dispersed it and wrought a calm. . . Behold what great results have been wrought by the stratagems of my enemies. They have augmented your zeal, inflamed your affectionate longing for me and procured me lovers in hundreds. Formerly I was beloved by my own people only; now even the Jews pay me respect. My enemies hoped to sever me from my friends and instead they have brought even aliens into our ranks. . . Where are our enemies? in ignominy;—where are we? in triumph.

No mean specimen of extemporary speech that! It will bear study for balance and rhythm and cadence, for sincere feeling simply expressed, with the best of premeditated utterances.

But Chrysostom was too sanguine. His enemies were scotched merely, not suppressed. The hostilities were soon renewed. He himself was in part to blame. He did not know how to moderate and win. The attack was his method of defense. He continued to thunder, speaking without restraint; in fidelity, it is true, but with all too much acerbity and heat. A silver statue to Eudoxia was unveiled near the church. The crowd with their noisy cheering interrupted a service. The festivities ended in an orgy. Next day the indig-

nant preacher again trained his guns on the empress. He called her Herodias, Jezebel, and the like, reprimanded her ambition and reproved her manner of life. She, of course, blazed with fresh wrath against the daring prelate. The council was summoned again. A second time he was condemned and banished. This time every precaution was taken against his rescue. The infuriated, outwitted populace burnt the church and the Senate house; but he whom they loved was hurried, under guard of rude soldiers, to a desolate region of the Caucasus. When his influence, by letters and other contacts, continued to be felt in Constantinople, an order was given for his still further removal, to a spot more desolate and lonely. His health was broken; the climate rigorous. He succumbed on the journey to the new exile and was buried where he died. His last words were "Glory be to God for all things."

Years afterward, his body was brought back to Constantinople, was reinterred with even imperial honors, Theodosius II, as he bowed over the reliquary containing his dust, making apology for the injustice done by his parents to a man so saintly, so faithful, so eloquent.

III

The way is now open for some analysis of his eloquence. Think of its background. The orator, like the poet, is born, not made merely. One writer speaks of Chrysostom's "nascent eloquence"; another

of his "nameless oratorical instinct." The suggestions are in point. It was a gift of God that John "stirred up" within himself. If that gift had not been his at birth, no laying on of hands by a bishop could have availed to make him eloquent. To oratory, also, applies the proverb, "You cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear." But we have, too, to remember how the gift was enlarged, by rhetorical drill; by skill acquired in logic when a pleader; by long years of meditation on the Scriptures, and discussion of their contents and meaning. The result was a character formed in the school of prayer and retirement, consummating a moral achievement and self-conquest won amid the lures and perils of an evil environment. He thus came to have a rich, intense, personal experience of the love and grace of God. As John Cassian, in the fifth century, said, "He kindled his zeal in the bosom of his Redeemer."

The love of Christ constrained him to fixed moral purpose, to a stern self-discipline, to a hunger and thirst after righteousness, in himself and others. Emotion was quick to stir in him; sympathy was ever ready to flow. Here was a source for Christian eloquence rarely equalled. There was no sham about Chrysostom's piety, either before, or after, he began to preach. I once heard Henry Ward Beecher, with scornful emphasis, fairly shout the words, "Let no man who is a sneak try to be an orator." From early days this relation between character and eloquence has been stressed. The Roman Quintilian, in the first century,

held that "the orator must be a man of noble character as well as of intellectual endowment; that he must be trained in virtue even from infancy." Our own Emerson called eloquence "the best speech of the best soul"; and with even more applicability to Chrysostom said:

> The eloquent man is not merely a beautiful speaker but one who is inwardly drunk with a certain belief. This terrible earnestness makes good an ancient superstition of the hunter that the bullet will hit the mark if it is first dipped in the marksman's blood.

Dr. S. Parkes Cadman is himself an illustration of his epigram "Without vibrant passion speech is dead." In preaching as in painting it is true, as Millet, the Barbizon artist, declared, "If you would touch others, first be touched yourself."

It is to the moral, spiritual, and intellectual requisites for eloquence that these tests apply. Merely physical qualifications are of less importance; apt to divert attention from his message to the man who brings it. Undoubtedly, no small part of the impression made by Phillips Brooks as a preacher was due to the majesty of his presence, the stern beauty of his features, and the deep wonder of his eyes. But his voice was not pleasing, nor was it well managed. On the other hand many men of slight stature, pallid countenance, and weak constitution have been powerful pleaders in the pulpit, charming hearers not by externalities but by what they had to say and the way they said it. Athanasius as we have seen, in the first

lecture, was a dwarf of a man. John Wesley was anything but a stalwart in frame. Charles Spurgeon was burly, but neither tall nor beautiful. One recoils, with a shrug and a smile, from feminine enthusiasms over the physical attractions of their favorite preachers. I once heard a woman say of such a pulpit-Apollo, "Just to see that man standing before that stained glass window, in the morning sunlight, is sermon enough for me." But that man left an edifice half-empty, and a wrecked organization when he resigned.

The facts about Chrysostom are these: He was so short that he usually preached sitting in the high *ambo*, and not, as was usual, standing on the steps of the sanctuary. If the references in his sermons, and in contemporary descriptions of the service, to the crowding close about him of the hearers, are to be taken at their face value, his voice could not have been carrying, sonorous, resonant, in quality. The best description of his physical appearance is this: "Short, with a large head, ample wrinkled forehead, eyes deep-set but pleasing, hollow cheeks, and a scanty gray beard." Professor Currier, in his essay on Chrysostom, quotes, as apt also to John, a saying of Boswell about William Wilberforce: "I saw a mere shrimp of a man mount the platform, but as I listened he grew and grew until the shrimp became a whale."

In addition to its background we have to speak of what, perhaps, I may be allowed to call the foreground of this fourth-century eloquence. Recluse though he had been through many of his years, the world of

nature had been always an open book before his eyes. He loved it well. He observed with keen interest the process of the seasons, the changes of the sky, the movement of winds and waters. His sermons are rich with touch-and-go references that were "the harvest of a quiet eye." Animals (the horse and mule), insects (the bee and spider), birds (the dove, the peacock, the mother bird fluttering over her despoiled nest), clouds, stars, storms, the sun, the play of light, the wonders of color—all these are in his discourses, as symbols, similes, metaphors, making vivid his truth. He compares a passage of Scripture to a meadow starred with flowers. These he loves and names—roses, lilies, violets. Then he changes his figure to a paradise, or garden, where is found not fragrance only, but fruit capable of nourishing the soul. One never thinks of rhetoric or prettiness; he does not linger or expand enough for that; but swiftly, the allusion well under restraint, he moves to a practical end.

Again, the life of the city is ever before him, "the gay, moving city" as he calls it. Artizans, actors, jugglers, spinning-women, charioteers hustling pedestrians aside in the streets; gluttons and drug-fiends, beggars and plutocrats, lawyers and judges are presented to his hearer's eyes, alive and moving; never save as objects of scorn or pity or exhortation, pointing his moral demand, illustrating the Scripture with which he is dealing. Ever in the preacher's ear, appealing to his homiletic sense, is what he calls, "the dear

hum of the multitude." But wider yet were his horizons. John Henry Newman speaks of him as

> one who was ever looking out with sharp but kindly eyes upon the world of men and their history, and hence he has always something to produce about them, new or old, to the purpose of his argument. I speak of . . . his eager contemplation of the many things they do, effect, or produce; of all their great works, as nations or as states; of the graphic fidelity with which he notes them down upon the tablets of his mind, and of the promptitude and propriety with which he calls them up as arguments or illustrations, in the course of his teaching, as the occasion requires.

But Chrysostom's immediate foreground is his audience. He loved men and lived for their enlightenment and salvation.

> I live only for you [he breaks out in one of his sermons] and I have no other care but that of your salvation. Wherefore I bear you all in my heart, not only when I am here, but also when I am at home.

In another discourse, words like these reveal the intensity of this feeling:

> Obey my voice, or depose me from this office. I cannot consent to mount this throne unless I accomplish something great. If I cannot do this it were better for me to stand below. As long as I sit here I cannot refrain, not so much out of fear of punishment to myself as on account of your salvation, which I earnestly desire.

His years of labor as a deacon had taken him among the people, and into their homes. He knew their thoughts, their ways, their sins, their sorrows, temptations, and cares. He knew men; the path to their

consciences, the road to their hearts. Such knowledge and sympathy drew the multitude to the preacher, and maintained a perfect *rapport* between them. They crowded close upon him, so massed that pickpockets plied their trade while he was speaking. Once, at least, he interrupted his sermon to warn the people against them. The auditors, after the unhallowed practise of circus and theater, frequently broke into rapturous applause of the preacher. Again and again he sternly rebukes this:

> You praise what I have said, you receive my exhortations with tumults of applause; but show your approbation by obedience; that is the praise which I seek, the applause which comes through deeds.

Enough has been said to show how, always, he had his hearers in hand; how directly, face to face, man to man, he dealt with them. His language can scarcely be called conversational, but the interplay of thought and feeling is exactly such as makes for that effect. The man spoke with simplicity even when most deeply in earnest. His speech is smooth, easy, graceful, with now and then a flight as on wings of an eagle; but there is no pose of the orator; no stately procession of big words, chosen for their novelty or splendor; nothing pompous or inflated. The eloquence of Chrysostom is not magniloquence. He can when he prefers be very sententious, packing a world of meaning into a single pithy sentence of proverbial form. There is not enough of this to give the staccato effect that some moderns regard as a chief feature of their eloquence.

Mr. Stephens, in his fine life of Chrysostom, has selected here and there from his homilies some of the best of these "winged words";

> The fire of sin is large but it is quenched by a few tears. . . Pain was given on account of sin, yet through pain sin is dissolved. . . Riches are possessions that we may possess them, not be possessed by them. . . Scripture relates the sins of saints that we may fear, the conversion of sinners that we may hope. . . Sin is drowned in the ocean of God's mercy, just as a spark is extinguished in a flood of water. . . The effect of prayer on the heart is like the rising of the sun upon the natural world.

When Antioch was shaken by earthquake he refers to it as "God shaking the city but establishing your minds."

There were at least two outstanding occasions, one in Antioch, one in Constantinople, which gave a dramatic phase to his eloquence. Before referring to them, it is worth while to note his swift sense of this element in ordinary, minor incidents and the readiness with which he turns them to account in his preaching. He was on his way to church on a wintry day. For some reason, a group of beggars lying in a miserable condition on the ground, made an unusual appeal to his sympathies. Beggars were common enough in the city, but this sight specially seized his mind and affected him deeply. When the time came to preach he ascended the *ambo* and discarding, apparently, what he had prepared at home, he began as follows:

> I have risen today to advocate a cause, just, useful and worthy of you. I have been deputed by the mendicants of our city. They have called upon me, not by words, nor by votes, nor by

any common resolve; but by their frightful and wretched appearance. For in hastening to this assembly as I crossed the forum and passed through the narrow streets, and saw many of them lying in the midst of the ways, of whom some were deprived of their hands and eyes, others covered with incurable sores, and exposing those places especially, which on account of the putrid gore they discharged needed concealment, I held it to be the most cruel insensibility not to appeal to your charity in their behalf. . . Especially during the severe cold.

What a dramatic introduction for a sermon on almsgiving! On another occasion while he was preaching, an attendant went round the church lighting the lamps. The people, of course, turned to watch him. Abruptly John broke forth:

At the very time I am setting forth before you the Scriptures you are turning your eyes away from me and fixing them upon the lamps and the man who is lighting the lamps. Oh! Of what a sluggish soul is this the mark. I, too, am kindling the light of the Scriptures, and upon my tongue is burning the taper of sound doctrine. Greater is this light and better, than the light which is yonder.

At Antioch the second year after Chrysostom began to preach, a riot which threatened the political ruin of the city broke out. The provoking cause was an excessive tax laid by the emperor upon the city. It was angrily resented and payment refused. A mob gathered. The lewd and vicious got control. The public baths were torn to pieces. The governor's palace was rushed, the statues of the imperial family adorning its hall of justice were overthrown, demolished, and in scurrilous ways dishonored. One building was fired before the military could subdue and

scatter the mob. The reaction among the citizens was pitiable. Many chief men fled to escape the consequence. The people generally sank into a state of dejection and terror. They had every reason to fear that the outraged emperor would raze their city. Flavian, their aged bishop, set off on a journey of eight hundred miles to see if he could placate the imperial wrath. Here was the opportunity of Chrysostom's life. He rose to meet it with superb courage and versatility. For twenty-two days in succession he mounted the pulpit, and poured forth a stream of surpassing eloquence in an effort to calm and cheer and uplift the dejected multitudes that gathered to hear him. He did not so much exploit the dramatic features of the occasion, though he did not neglect to use them for his main end. What he did was to pour forth day after day a stream of Scriptural truths, based on the lesson of the day. He sought to heal humbled and softened hearts with the message of God's mercy; to inspire and encourage them with the truths of his Providence and care. Many heretofore alien to the faith became Christians as the fruit of these "Homilies on the Statues." Many of them are sternly ethical, denouncing profanity and perjury. It was Lent. His teaching on fasting is peculiarly full of common sense and wisdom: "Fast not from food only but from sins," its urgent plea. The facility with which the preacher seized each emergent incident of these strenuous weeks and turned it to spiritual profit, evinces mental readiness of the

first order. When Flavian returned on Easter Eve with news of the Emperor's forgiveness, the tired preacher still rose to the occasion, and with enthusiasm voiced the thanksgiving and praise of that Easter Sunday morning. No group of sermons has quite risen, in any subsequent age, to the high level of these. The chief thing to admire in them is their subordination of the dramatic situation to the supreme spiritual end of preaching.

It was in Constantinople, years afterward, that Eutropius, having filled up the measure of his crimes, was compelled to flee for his life, from the people and soldiers, who were determined to put an end to his increasingly insolent and corrupt rule. He sought sanctuary at the altar in the church. Chrysostom, then the Patriarch instead of the simple presbyter he had been at Antioch, promised him shelter and protection. The next day was Sunday. When the service began the curtain was stretched across the sanctuary, where alone Eutropius, the trembling, cowering fugitive was safe. When Chrysostom rose to speak the curtain was withdrawn revealing the fallen minister to the eyes of the multitude, who had packed the church eager to hear what John would have to say. But few expected the dramatic scene that followed. Here was the opportunity of a lifetime to drive home the preacher's favorite truth of the vanity and ruin of luxurious and dishonest living, in high places. Startlingly, pointing to the culprit at the altar, he broke at once into impassioned speech:

O vanity of vanities! Words how seasonable at all times, how preeminently seasonable now. Where, now, are the pomp and circumstance of yonder man's consulship? Where his torch-lit festivities? Where the applause which once greeted him? Where his banquets and garlands? Where is the stir that once attended his appearance in the streets, the flattering compliments addressed to him in the amphitheater? They are gone, they are all gone; one rude blast has shattered all the leaves and shows us the tree stripped quite bare, and shaken to its very roots. . . Vanity of vanities—all is Vanity! These are words which should be inscribed on our walls and on our garments, in the market-place, by the wayside, on our doors, but above all in the conscience of each should they be written and constantly meditated.

Then turning to Eutropius:

Did I not continually warn thee that wealth was a runaway slave, a thankless servant? . . . Lo! Now experience has proved to thee that it is not only fugitive and thankless but murderous, also.

Again, addressing the people, he declared that it was the glory of the Church to have sheltered him:

The suppliant is an ornament to the altar. "What!" you say, "this iniquitous, rapacious creature an ornament to the altar?" Hush! The sinful woman was permitted to touch the feet of Jesus Christ himself, a permission which excites not our reproach but our admiration and praise.

Then the whole dramatic scene is turned into a spirited plea for forgiveness, and an appeal that all entreat the emperor to spare the life of the abject Eutropius.

Some of our modern preachers seem to yearn for the dramatic in the pulpit. But it is one thing to arrange it; quite another to seize the legitimate occa-

sions for it as they arise in the course of events, local or national. To not a few of us the attempt to introduce actual drama as a substitute for preaching is a confession of failure in our legitimate calling to *preach* the gospel. Preaching and impersonation are not the same. It seems quite certain that the church will never be able to compete with the theater and its trained actors, in presenting truth in dramatic form. But occasions do arise when watchful men can give to ordinary preaching the advantage of a dramatic treatment of topic or event.

Two suggestions as to pulpit eloquence, growing out of the ministry of Chrysostom, remain to be noticed briefly. The first is that exposition and eloquence are not incompatibles. The existing prejudice against expository preaching is due to the want of care, and attention to it, by ministers themselves. The vast bulk of Chrysostom's preaching was expository. Book by book he went through the Bible. In doing so he never fell below the level of his own eloquence. Possibly his sermons in their fourth-century form would not be acceptable to modern hearers; though his personality behind them might make them even now effective. But there has been a preacher of our day, who taught us, if we will look to his work, that exposition, based on the most scholarly scrutiny and the most serious study of the text of Scripture, is capable of being wrought into the finest homiletic form. His sermons are unified in structure, eloquent in phrasing, with illustrations as brief as they are

apposite, not lying on, but woven into, the fabric of his thought. The whole discourse is fused into a glow by evangelical fervor and carried to a climax by earnestly direct appeal. Let the thirty volumes Alexander McLaren left behind him win you to his methods. Throw away magazines and newspapers as sources for topical sermons to catch the people, and give your laborious days to the study of God's word and the effective way of making it known. Your people in the end will bless you for doing it.

The other suggestion is by way of warning. It is a danger, as well as an advantage, to be eloquent. By force of one's own glow it is possible to be carried out of bounds. Doctor Dargan has said of Chrysostom that "his snare was the overmuch." In the heat of discourse one may be betrayed into exaggeration. In a tempest of feeling one may transgress the code of courtesy and charity. To make a point one may strain a point, and be less than absolutely sincere. It is sure that in his last days Chrysostom lacked the self-restraint and poise of spirit necessary to ideal preaching. He was bitter and violent and personal beyond measure. It may seem presumptive to speak thus of one so faithful, so devoted, so transcendent in pulpit and life. In restricting this lecture so exclusively to its specific subject I may have done him less than justice. His life in its noble wealth of character and labors is not covered by a study of his preaching. Moreover, the strength, the vindictiveness, and the virulence of his enemies may be a justifica-

tion of his acerbity. Possibly it was simply zeal for his cause that moved him. But one is at liberty to doubt it was so, without abatement of honor, or acclaim, for what he was and what he accomplished. Beware of the overmuch, seems to me one of the lessons of his ministry.

There is an eloquence of silence that is even more potent than that of speech: Those three patient years, full of labors to the last; flaming with missionary zeal; expressing by pen what was denied to the voice; consecrated by the sufferings uncomplainingly endured, in the desolate wilds of the Caucasus; full of thankfulness to the end; with parting breath giving "Glory to God for all things"—those years are the finest flower of Chrysostom's eloquence.

IV

BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX
(1091–1153)

PREACHING AND SAINTLINESS

BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX

I

"The Middle Ages! They seem so far away; intellectually so preposterous, spiritually so strange; full of mystery and pall and vaguer glory, of metaphysical construction and spiritual passion."

With such words, Henry Osborn Taylor prefaces his brilliant, two-volume study of *The Mediæval Mind.* "Is it possible," he asks, "that the Middle Ages should speak to us, as through a common humanity?" We are about to seek an answer to that question in the life of Bernard of Clairvaux. However far above the common height in moral and spiritual attainments, Bernard is human to the heart of him. I have not called him *Saint* Bernard, as the usage is in some circles. No canonization by one pope, nor assignment to a place among the Seraphic Doctors by another, could add anything to the reality, or the elevation, of his saintliness. Such edicts of ecclesiastical segregation cannot remove him from the fellowship of all who in Scripture, or out of it, are "called to be saints." This is at once the splendor and the simplicity of his holy life: so near to God; so close to man.

He came into the world in a time that waited for such an one as he. It was still an age of strife and confusion and sin. But superstition was not so rife as once, nor ignorance so general. The darker shadows of a century past were beginning to withdraw. Depression and fear were giving way before

renewals of hope. Men's minds were astir once more. Spiritual forces were reasserting themselves. Those impulses were then beginning to throb, which reached their full expression and effect in the *Summa Theologica* of Aquinas, at the end of the thirteenth, and the immortal trilogy of Dante, at the beginning of the fourteenth century. The "Vision" splendid of the somber Florentine was the summation of the Middle Ages, the harbinger of the Renaissance soon to arrive. Bernard lived and labored in the early dawn of the time that, in these two, rose to its high noon. At no other period since the death of Charlemagne, in the ninth century, would he have found a world so ready for his saintly life, so open to the thrill and power of his personality. What he accomplished, "is practically the history of the first half of the twelfth century." It has been summed up in these sentences: "He gave new" (and purer) "life to monasticism." "He promoted the reform of the clergy"—outside the monasteries. "He led in the suppression of heresy, ended a papal schism; set on foot the second Crusade; and for a quarter of a century swayed Christendom as never holy man before or after him."

For his period, Gibbon calls him, "The Oracle of Europe." Men so far apart in other opinion, as Aquinas, Bossuet, Luther, Calvin, Voltaire, and Harnack are one in their praise of his saintly character, his surpassing leadership in the affairs, political and ecclesiastical, of his time.

II

Bernard was born near Dijon, in Burgundy, in 1091; he died at his abbey of Clairvaux in 1153, in his sixty-second year. His father, Tescelin, was a knight, who perished in the first Crusade. His mother, Aletta, was of the same devout type as Anchusa, the mother of Chrysostom, Nonna, the wife of Gregory Nazianzen, and Monica, the mother of Augustine; rare women all; who adorned with a life rich in faith and prayers and good works the gospel they so ardently believed. Both the parents of Bernard were of noble descent. He seems to have inherited from each of them. From the father came his militant spirit and courage, which, when occasion arose, could dare and fight opposers of his will and cause. From his mother he got his physical beauty and those fine and rare endowments of the spirit which early led him to a life wholly devoted to God. His mother never faded from his thoughts. Her influence was a controlling factor throughout his life. What may be called his conversion came about through a swift, intense, mental vision of her and of her hopes for him. He was on his way to the camp where his brothers, with an army, were engaged in a siege. Possibly a half-formed purpose of entering the military life was in his mind. All at once, as he journeyed, his mother was with him, in such a vivid realization of her, as shook him with emotion. He found a church near by, and before its altar gave him-

self, in a flood of tears, irrevocably to God and his service.

Immediately he took steps to retire from the world. But he was not content to do so alone. He persuaded his brothers, other kindred, and some friends, to the number of thirty in all, to join him. Together they entered the convent of Citeaux and became monks of the Cistercian order. The life of the place leaped forward at once, by such an accession of youth and strength, passing from decadence to prosperity. At Cluny, a rich and prosperous monastery not far away, Bernard might have found more distinguished surroundings, finer buildings, more ambitious associates, and a monastic discipline less strict. In the spirit that ruled his life he chose the needier sphere, poorer and more austere, in which to begin his conventual experiences. From the start he kept the severe rules of his order with absolute obedience. He often exceeded them. He ate little. One meal a day, sometimes consisting only of bread and water, generally sufficed him. Not strong enough for field work he assumed the menial duties of the kitchen. He prayed often, spoke little, meditated much, studied hard—the Scriptures especially. With him more than others, " Frost o' the mouth was thaw o' the mind." He slept as little as possible, regarding sleep as time wasted. Later, he came to see that such an excess of abstinence was not wise. It enfeebled his body, reduced his strength, ruined his health and so unfitted him in a measure for his largest usefulness. To the day of his death he was

frail and thin, his face, with all its charm, stamped with the signs of rigid fasting and abstemious living. In later days his strong and saving common sense, always the counterbalance of his burning zeal, led him to moderate the rigor of his ascetic practise; but he was never less than "a monk with his whole soul." He urged his brethren in these later days not to go to extremes of self-mortification.

Three years brought such increase to Citeaux, and revealed in Bernard such force of mind and ability for leadership, giving an undergirding of strength and wisdom to the extremes of his piety, that he was chosen at the age of twenty-five to lead out a colony of monks to form a new monastery, and to be its abbot. The site chosen was a desolate valley, thirty-two miles from Troyes. It had been a nest for thieves, and was filled with a dense growth of bitter shrubbery —therefore known as the Valley of Wormwood. In a few years the labors of Bernard and his monks transformed it into one of the beauty-spots of France; smiling, fruitful fields and thriving gardens, justified its new name of Clairvaux—the Clear Valley. This remained, till his death, the home of Bernard. He was never wholly happy away from it. His letters during his frequent, and sometimes prolonged, absences on public affairs, are full of longing for what he called his "beloved Jerusalem." Under his mild, yet firm rule, so full of love and kindly counsel, so brotherly and benign, Clairvaux became "the model of monasticism." Under its trees he loved to sit for medita-

tion and prayer. In its *scriptorium* he wrote constantly. Treatises of various types, full of high thinking and fervent piety, came from his pen. He wrote letters to all quarters of Europe, to all classes and conditions of men. They are gracious, dignified, tender, homely, or severe, as the occasion they met, demanded. Nearly five hundred of them have been preserved. In the abbey pulpit he preached daily, when at home, sermons of which we have more to say presently. As the fame of his sanctity, prudence, and judgment spread and grew, multitudes resorted to him for counsel. Men of high station brought to him their problems; the poor, their need. In a time of famine in Burgundy he and his monks fed from their stores two thousand of the hungry for three months. The wronged referred their injustice to him that all might be righted. It even got abroad that he could work miracles. By his contemporaries the fact was not doubted, except perhaps by Abelard and some of his rationalistic disciples. Blind and lame and sick professed themselves healed by his touch. He believed himself that he had such power. He always spoke of himself most humbly in connection with this power:

> I greatly marvel [he wrote] what these miracles may mean, or why it should be seen that God works them by such an one as I am. . . I am conscious neither of holiness nor deceit. . . Signs of this kind do not contemplate the holiness of the one but the salvation of the many.

These miracles of Bernard are vouched for by so many witnesses of high character that they are set in a class

by themselves. But those were credulous days. What shall *we* say? Morison, Bernard's English biographer, says, they "are neither to be accepted with credulity, nor denied with fury." Which leaves the case much in the air. Neander gives a very guarded deliverance, refusing to decide against them. In this, Doctor Storrs, in his glowing book on Bernard, concurs. Is not the wisest thing we can say, in our hesitation, what Doctor Schaff says, "There are few mortal men whom miracles would so befit as Bernard"?

With such a man at its head is it any wonder that Clairvaux flourished as no other monastery of its day? Men of all ranks and all stations crowded to it; knights and scholars, rulers and ruled, rich and poor looked upon it with favor, and held its purity and strict devotion to God and man in high esteem. From it went monks all over Europe, to found new, or to restore old, monasteries. When Bernard came to his life's end, 160 of them had been established, under his encouragement and leadership; while more than seven hundred monks were still living at Clairvaux to mourn his loss.

III

It is scarcely in accord with our theme and purpose to attempt an exhaustive account of Bernard's public service to his age. Only as it is related to his characteristic saintliness are we concerned with it. We have seen what that became under the impulse and care of his pious mother; developed, afterward, by his

devoted, ascetic life at Clairvaux. We have yet to see how his activities and engagements in the larger life of European affairs, political and ecclesiastical, modified the tendency of the convent to make him merely a pietist. One is not unaware of the baleful effects of the monastic life upon some of those who practised it. Not all the monks, even at Clairvaux, were Bernards. Not a few who became monks were demoralized, rather than sanctified, by their segregation from their fellow men. In a summary of the evils besetting such a life, Doctor Storrs sees men "becoming selfish, sour, fanatical, disdainful of enterprise and of domesticity." The recluse life developed in others a haughty, spiritual pride. Envy, jealousy, petty strifes, even violent hates were not unknown within monastery walls. Read Browning's *Soliloquy in a Spanish Cloister* for a biting, sarcastic picture of such a garbed grotesque of piety: The coarse, cowled, profane creature is watching a brother monk in the garden, and soliloquizes:

> Gr-r-r—there, go, my heart's abhorrence!
> Water your damned flower pots, do!
> If hate killed men, Brother Lawrence,
> God's blood, would not mine kill you?

Heaven-high above all such descents into hell was Bernard, by every nobler instinct of his nature as the child of his mother. But there are subtler perils than such for those who dwell apart. A lofty feeling of distinction, dividing them utterly from outside souls; a sense of superiority that counts common folks un-

clean, banning and blasting all not of their perfectionist type, leads some assertively "holy ones" to such exclusivism as that of the Novatian bishop whom Constantine sarcastically ordered to "get a ladder and climb to heaven by himself, in his own way." From all such perils Bernard was saved by his contacts with the world of men and affairs; by his familiarity with the great main stream of life in his time, on which he was floated here and there. Changing the figure, his saintliness was never that "fugitive and cloistered virtue" of which John Milton wrote,

> unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees the adversary, but slinks out of the race where the immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat.

On the contrary, Bernard was continually called away from his beloved brotherhood and his ardent devotions to exercise, in behalf of others, that clear insight, sound judgment, and capacity for masterful management and leadership which were so eminently his. Statesman not less than Saint was he; as the rulers, scholars, and common people of his time well knew, and availed themselves to the uttermost of his gifts. Let three such occasions suffice: To dictate the election of a pope is no small undertaking. It meant in this instance carrying his candidate into the "chair of Peter," against stiff and persistent opposition, by ousting an antipope, wealthy, with many friends, and apparently in secure possession at Rome. Just that was what Bernard accomplished, when he put Innocent II upon the papal throne, and then wrote him a letter

telling him how corrupt and unsettling former administrations had been; with pointed instructions as to the wise and holy way in which he was to conduct himself. There was one recalcitrant noble, the Duke of Aquitaine, who had opposed the election of Innocent, and had deposed some of the bishops, in his territory, who refused to support him against Bernard and Innocent. To him came Geoffrey, Bishop of Chartres, and Bernard, to demand in the pope's name the restoration of these bishops to their sees. The duke is described as a man of great height, with the strength of a giant, violent of temper and stubborn to the last degree. The frail Bernard, whom he could have crushed with his great grasp, faced him fearlessly and demanded his accedence. He refused bluntly, saying he recognized Innocent as pope, but had sworn an oath never to forgive the bishops who had deserted and offended him. Bernard tried persuasion in vain, and finally went away, entered the church, and began the mass. William the Duke followed, but dared, under ecclesiastical ban, go no farther than the door. When Bernard had consecrated the host he suddenly came down through the church, lifting the "host" on high, his frailty transfigured into menace, as, with eyes flaming and in a terrifying voice, he addressed the giant who had defied the highest authority of the church, in these words:

> We have besought you and you have spurned us. . . Behold here comes to you the Virgin's Son, the Head and Lord of the Church which you persecute. Your Judge is here . . . into whose

hands your soul is to pass! Will you spurn him, also? Will you despise him, as you have despised his servants?

In that age there could be only one result. The towering, conscience-stricken ruler fell terrified to the ground; a solemn awe struck dumb the on-lookers. When raised and recovered, the duke, at the behest of Bernard, gave the kiss of peace to the bishop who had most offended him and led him to his place in the church, restoring him and the others, eventually, to their office. It is even recorded by contemporaries that the fierce, sensual man became a penitent and a religious believer, to so marked a degree, that when he died he was on a devotional visit to the shrine of a saint.

Perhaps the most signal instance of the influence and power of Bernard in the public life of his time was his tour of Europe preaching the Second Crusade, calling men of every sort, and masses of men of all nationalities, to service, looking to the protection of the Holy City and the Holy Sepulchre from the menacing foes that were then threatening to bring to nought what the First Crusade had effected. It was with reluctance that Bernard entered upon this great endeavor. Only the urgencies of many whom he honored and whose judgment he trusted led him to undertake the mighty task. Once started he threw his whole soul into it. The effect of his eloquence is beyond adequate description. Everywhere he went crowds listened to his impassioned pleas. In all places he was received with the veneration and responsive

enthusiasm that his saintly personality always aroused. Many sought his healing touch for themselves or others. As it was in France, so in Germany. Though the people there understood nothing of the language he spoke, until the interpreter gave its sense, the intensity of Bernard's uninterpreted words, the sight of that emaciated face, transfigured into a glory, as from a flame within, and the pleading tones of his masterful voice made such an impression that all who heard him were carried away. There was with him such a divine power, moving men's minds, and in him such a devotion to the main purpose of his life, that a great religious awakening attended his efforts. It was, in medieval fashion, what we should call a revival. Many who had hitherto given themselves up to their unrestrained passions and desires, were seized with compunction, as his calls to repentance penetrated their hearts. They not only took the crosses that were the symbol of their enlistment for the Crusade, but yielded themselves also to the love and grace revealed in Christ's own Cross, to begin a new life of self-control, in His Name.

Neander quotes Bishop Otto of Freisingen, a contemporary who joined the Crusade, as saying, that

> every man of sound understanding would be forced to acknowledge so sudden and uncommon a change could have been produced in no other way than by the right hand of the Lord.

A movement, begun as a political endeavor to circumvent Eastern foes of the faith, by warfare, the religious genius and tremendous personal power of Ber-

nard inspired by the Spirit, and upheld in his frailty by the help of God, turned into a great moral and spiritual renovation of the life of the nations he visited. A collateral benefit of his mission was the success he met in assuaging, in Germany, the popular fury against the Jews. At Mentz he confronted and subdued the ferocious enthusiast Rudolph, a monk who had preached, along with the Crusade, a fiery urge of "death to the Jews," resulting in rioting and bloodshed throughout the Rhine region. Bernard sent him back to his convent with a new spirit in his breast. The utter failure of the Crusade itself, when actually undertaken, was a grief unspeakable to Bernard. Men blamed him for the failure who was not at all to blame for the divisions and hesitations that caused the debacle.

We turn for our third instance of Bernard's public life to his part in the prosecution and condemnation of Abelard as a heretic. This is, perhaps, in all the great Saint's career, the least estimable of his actions. Before we condemn him altogether, however, for what seems to be a blot upon his saintly name and character, there are some things to be said in abatement. With all his mental acuteness and intellectual brilliance, absorbed with the critical reason and its problems, Abelard was an immoral man. His sexual irregularities were a horror in the eyes of the pure-hearted monk of Clairvaux, who looked upon the vain and pleasure-seeking life of the proud scholastic not as something suavely to be compassionated, but severely

condemned. Abelard had plucked "the rose from the fair forehead of an innocent love and set a blister there." Heloise was but eighteen. In his autobiography Abelard confesses that he had deliberately planned her ruin. It was no Paolo and Francesca affair. The father's conduct when the child was born was not altogether considerate. Neither the love unto the uttermost revealed in the exquisite letters of Heloise, nor Abelard's thoughtfulness for her and her sisterhood at the "Paraclete" can excuse or palliate his earlier ruthlessness. The subsequent marriage was a poor balm for such a wound. All of this affair must have seemed to Bernard a monstrous affront to a God of purity and righteousness.

The two men were as far apart in things of the mind, as in moral and spiritual attitude toward truth and life. Cousin has called Abelard "the father of modern rationalism." It was "this dialectic and critical spirit which insisted upon understanding and explaining before believing" that roused Bernard, and those who stood with him, against Abelard. Bernard's own words define the attitude of his mind toward the unsearchable mysteries of God and the soul. These are his words:

> The faith of the righteous believes; it does not dispute. But that man [meaning Abelard], suspicious of God, has no mind to believe what his reason has not previously argued.

It was to the same effect that Bernard wrote to Pope Innocent to prevent favorable consideration of Abelard's appeal to him:

Peter Abelard is trying to make void the merit of Christian faith when he deems himself able by human reason to comprehend God altogether. He ascends to the heavens and descends even to the abyss! Nothing may hide from him in the depths of hell or in the heights above! The man is great in his own eyes—this scrutinizer of Majesty and fabricator of heresies.

Clearly the two men were in full opposition in their moral principles, in their intellectual attitudes. Reconciliation of such antipathies is never easy, if it is ever possible. The spirit of tolerance was not the temper of the Middle Ages. Scarcely, yet, does such a spirit thrive extensively, among ourselves. Fundamentalists stand with Bernard for the conservation of old forms of faith; Modernists, with Abelard, for freedom of inquiry, for critical examination of even the most sacred teachings of Scripture. Their war-cry is "Liberty! first, last and all the time." Neither side is wholly free from the tendency to invoke the ban. So it was in the twelfth century, to a more intense degree. A great Synod was to assemble at Sens. Abelard claimed the privilege of appearing before it to vindicate his principles and answer his enemies, advising his partizans to be present to hear him. Bernard was urged by William of Thierry, whom one writer unjustly dubs the "jackal of that lion," to appear against him. But Bernard loved not controversy. He shrank from submitting sacred beliefs to a promiscuous discussion; especially with a man of the temperament and character of Abelard. He had, besides, a very humble opinion of his own powers, unskilled as he was in dialectics. Much against his wish,

when the Archbishop commanded him to undertake the rôle of accuser, he yielded, from a sense of duty. When the Council met it was a brilliant scene. The king, many nobles, and high ecclesiastics not a few, were there. Bernard rose modestly and with downcast face, offered a list of the teachings of Abelard which he deemed heretical, asking that they be read by the clerk, and their author summoned to plead or to deny. The reading was begun. Suddenly Abelard pressed forward, demanding that it stop; protesting that he would not answer; announcing that he appealed to the pope. When Bernard calmly turned to assure him of a candid hearing, with no unfair treatment, he wheeled and strode hurriedly out. His act was never explained, by himself. One of Abelard's followers, Berengar by name, came to the defense of his Master, representing that Bernard and the bishops of the Council, at a preliminary conference, being heated with wine, decided, before the Council met, or the accused had been heard, on his condemnation. Dr. David Schaff, however, seems justified in answering this " invective " by the remark, " His charges against Bernard are altogether out of accord with his character as it is otherwise known to us." The significant fact is, that Abelard himself remained silent as to the reason for his precipitous withdrawal and refusal to answer the charges laid against him. What moved him to such an inglorious retreat? Was he cowed by that saintly figure who turned to face him? Did the radiant personality of the Saint put the fear of God

into the heart of the Scholastic? The Council, after discussion, condemned his teachings and forbade him to promulgate them. His appeal to Rome was in vain. Bernard's influence there was stronger than his. The pope confirmed the findings of the Council and silenced the heretic. He was thereafter a discredited and broken man. He was buried at Cluny a year after. There Peter the Abbot had shown him much kindness.

Bernard was even more intense against Arnold of Brescia, one of the most revolutionary of the disciples of Abelard. The references to Arnold in a letter to Guido, are the expression of feelings nearer to hate than any I have met with, in all my reading about Bernard:

> Arnold of Brescia, whose speech is honey and whose teaching is poison, who has the head of a dove and the tail of a scorpion, whom Brescia vomited forth, Rome abhorred, France repelled, Germany abominates, Italy will not receive, is said to be with *you*.

Here is fury indeed! One is inclined to say, paraphrasing Browning's allusion to Shakespeare's "sonnet-key": "Did Bernard write thus? Then the less Bernard he!" Even a saint who can, supposedly, work miracles, when engaged in theological controversy, is in danger of tarnishing his saintliness.

IV

No such strain will you find in any of the sermons of Bernard. They reflect not the stir and turbulence of a busy world, but the quiet, contemplative life at

Clairvaux. There in the Abbey pulpit the majority of them were preached. Not the strife and collisions of controversy, but calm meditations upon life and death and judgment and salvation are on his lips, at home. Even discourses which deal more exclusively with theological doctrines are affirmative and not polemical. He carried no sword into his pulpit but a dulcimer on which to play his sweet tunes of heavenly love and saving grace. He is often at the Cross, in the spirit of adoration seen in his hymns, found as translations in our hymn-books, such as "O Sacred Head Now Wounded"; and,

> Jesus, the very thought of thee
> With sweetness fills my breast.

Nearly three hundred and fifty of his discourses have been preserved, entire or in part, doubtless through the love and labor of the monks who first heard them. They all spring out of a rich, intimate, mystical experience of God's love revealed in Christ. The Unseen, as most of us describe it, was a constantly open vision to Bernard. The light and the shadow of the eternal world are over all his preaching. His own words about it are such as these, "Instructed by the mistress Experience, not judgment alone, nor only mercy, but mercy and judgment equally will I sing unto thee, O Lord." All the phases of his saintliness appear in his sermons—his mystical sense (for one instance) of the sweetness and solace of the Scriptures, behind the plain, cold meaning of their historical

and literary form. He preached, for example, during eighteen years, at varying intervals, eighty-six sermons on the "Song of Songs, Called Solomon's." When he died he had only reached the first verse of the third chapter. To him this Canticle was an affecting and minute allegory of the love between Christ and the Church, his Bride. With utmost ingenuity, facility, and purity of mind he found spiritual meanings in its sensuous details of love. The clause "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth" becomes a symbol for the Incarnation; an expression of the preacher's desire that he and his hearers may be infolded in that divine Love, of which the gift of the only begotten Son is God's Kiss to the world.

> It is plain [he says, in closing the sermon] that this holy kiss was a grace, needed by the world to give faith to the weak and satisfy the desire of the perfect. The kiss itself is none other than the Mediator of God and man, the Man Christ Jesus.

Bernard's theme, whatever the text, from which he springs into the empyrean, is heavenly love—for God, by man, no less than of God to man. His love for Christ, born of Christ's love for him, was the passion of his life: "I must live for him who has acquired a property in my life, by giving up his own for me." This love, mutual, and growing ever more fervent, he delights to trace through all its stages and manifestations, till it comes to its perfection in loving of God for God's sake alone. Only Paradise and the Beatific Vision will bring that as the realized attainment of redeemed souls standing face to Face with their

Lord. Not all of his discourses were of this esoteric type. The variety and adaptability of his preaching are set forth in that *Vita Prima* which is his biography, prepared by contemporaries who heard him often and loved him well. It is there said of his preaching:

> His speech, whatever persons he spoke to for the edifying of souls, was adapted to his audience; for he knew the intelligence, the habits, the occupations of each and all. To country folk he spoke as if born and bred in the country; and so to other classes, as if he always had been occupied with their business. He was learned with the erudite, and simple with the simple, and with spiritual men rich in illustrations of perfection and wisdom. He adapted himself to all, desiring to gain all for Christ.

In the case of Bernard, as in every case, it is the man behind the sermon, before the audience, that gives to his message its power. Look at Bernard as his contemporaries saw him! One of them declared, "He persuaded the eye before the ear heard him." The testimony is explained by its own context to have a spiritual and not merely a physical reference. The *Vita Prima* gives to it that interpretation of the radiant saintliness of the man which does so much to explain the effect of his preaching upon all classes:

> As a helpmeet for His Holy Spirit, God made his body to conform. In his flesh there was visible a certain grace, but spiritual rather than of the flesh. A brightness not of earth shone in his look; there was an angelic purity in his eyes and a dovelike simplicity. The beauty of the inner man was so great that it would burst forth in visible tokens, and the outer man would seem bathed from the store of inward purity and copious grace.

A man so infused with celestial light and radiance, even in our day, could preach with spiritual effect a sermon on the Love of God and his Son, based on Canticles, if he saw fit. The trouble, if I may say so, brethren, is not half so much with our texts, our outlines, our sermons. It is with ourselves. The world is too much with us. We lack the transfiguration that comes only in solitude and prayer. We have not learned, as Bernard knew, how to suck honey out of Scripture for the sweetening of our souls. We are concerned too much with its rocky problems; too little with its inner and spiritual riches. There is more of Abelard's critical reason in us, than there is of Bernard's childlike faith. We have no keen, clear sense of Jesus, "nearer than breathing, closer than hands or feet." The air of the Eternal is not about us as we move and speak.

"My dear," said Baron Bunsen to his wife, in her last hours, "in thy face I have seen the Eternal." Of what preachers is that said today? Every one said it of Bernard. Find me one, now, of whom it is true, and I will show you a man on whose lips hungry souls hang. "I perceive," said the woman of Shunem about Elisha, "that this is a holy man of God who passeth by us continually." Is that being said of the ministry, at large, these days? Who is being sought as Henry Drummond was that souls passing over may have a "breath of him" before they die? Only once, for an hour, was I alone with Henry Drummond. But that hour never can be forgotten by me.

I can testify that, as the twelfth century monks said of their Abbot, so from Drummond,

> the beauty of the inner man burst forth in visible tokens till the outer man was bathed from the store of inward purity and copious grace.

This is what I mean (call it mystical if you will): Bernard, and souls like him, are incarnations of the Spirit of Christ so truly, that their saintliness is in their very personality. They preach with such power because they have earnestly answered the "call to be saints." The intensity of their spiritual force imparts to their preaching such vitality that it is glorified, as was the person of our Lord at his transfiguration. By such preaching the souls who hear are thrilled, lifted, saved.

V

MASSILLON
(1663–1742)

ART IN PREACHING

MASSILLON

I

In the long history of the French nation, no period has surpassed in outward splendor the reign of Louis XIV. The luxuriousness, the talents, the craftiness, and the sensuality of the monarch gave complexion to the age. It was carnal in its grandeur, hollow at the heart; intellectually brilliant, but imposing only on the surface. It was an hour of glitter, when simple goodness was in abeyance; when heavenly grace was to be found only in obscurity. It is not altogether singular that such an era should have seen the *art* of preaching reach its zenith. Voltaire considered the period the greatest of all time for pulpit oratory.

The situation was exactly one to furnish the pulpit an unsurpassed opportunity to deal faithfully with the conscience; to rebuke, even to denounce, the immorality and worldliness so prevalent everywhere, from the court of the monarch to the slums of the vicious poor. But at the same time the taste and tendency of the age were of the sort that demanded of its preachers strict attention to form. The very language in which the sermons were conceived and spoken lent itself to artistry. More than any other the French is the language of nice verbal distinctions, of finished sentences and elegant phrases.

We are not surprised then to find that three preaching priests emerged, during the reign of Louis XIV,

who are to this day estimated as among the greatest orators who have ever stood in the pulpit. They are Bossuet, Bourdaloue, and Massillon. Bossuet was the greatest orator of the three, *qua* orator. His discourses moved with majestic pace. His oratory was of the imperial order, subduing by its passion, not to say by a sort of fury in its onset.

Bourdaloue, the Jesuit, was the logician of the three, marshaling battalions of arguments with supreme ease and skill, to the discomfiture of sinners and heretics alike.

Massillon was the consummate artist of the eloquent trio. When in Paris he heard his rivals preach, he remarked, "I shall not preach as they do." Nor did he. His speech had a rhetorical skill and finish lacking in theirs. He was more subtle and refined than they. His appeal to the emotions was more sympathetic. His intensity was equal to theirs, but more under control. He has been felicitously compared to "a mother frightening her child from the wrong way into the right." His very restraint added to the emotion of his hearers; to their fears under his startling anticipations of the great Judgment; to their surge of feeling awakened by his tender appeals for sincerity in life and conduct.

When Bourdaloue heard him, he said to a friend, "He must increase, but I must decrease." On another occasion Bourdaloue declared, "The progress one has made in eloquence must be judged by the relish he finds in reading Massillon's works."

When Massillon preached before the King, Louis came to him after the sermon, saying, "Father, I have heard several great orators in my Chapel; I have been pleased with them; as for you, every time I have heard you, I have been very much displeased *with myself.*" But the impression in the case seems to have been very transient. The King's ears were tickled and his taste gratified by oratory, but his conscience, when stirred, easily went to sleep, and he did nothing toward discarding his mistresses or reforming his life. Voltaire, also, though he praised Massillon as the Racine of the pulpit, saying that his sermons were always lying on his table that they might be read to him, never changed his attitude toward the Church and its teachings. I cannot but agree with Professor Currier, however, that the utter failure of such preachers, as the three I have named, to effect any substantial change in the lives of men, or the moral conditions obtaining in the nation, was not due to their art and eloquence, as implying a want of genuine sincerity and spiritual aim in the preacher. They were not speaking for entertainment merely. Their passion was not theatrical. Their volleys against vice were not "blank fulminations," as Professor Wilkinson calls them; their rhetoric was not cant. The leading star of the Paris stage went to hear Massillon and came away saying; "There is an orator! We are but players." These preachers were dead in earnest behind their finished discourses. But the people were not in earnest. All classes of their hearers had but a shallow interest in

spiritual realities. Rather, "They loved to amuse themselves with sacred things." To hear sermons was a fad of the hour; the example set by the King and Court. The purity of aim and sincerity of intention on the preacher's part were ignored. They liked even his denunciations, as they enjoyed the tragic drama at the theater. For the moment a tremendous impression might be made by some extraordinary effort of the preacher. They who heard might even be lifted out of their seats and lean, terror-stricken, toward the pulpit; but they went away to forget, and to live as before.

One instance of this kind of popular but transient excitement about preaching is recorded. When Massillon was to preach at Notre Dame the crush at the entrance was extraordinary even for a Paris crowd. One amazon, a woman of the town, bent on hearing him, was roughly elbowing her way through the crush, and was heard to say, "Eh', wherever this devil of a Massillon preaches he makes such a row!"

II

I have not found within my reach much material for any outline of his life. I am chiefly indebted to a sketch of Prof. J. F. Bingham for the details I give.

The man who thus became a sensation of the hour in Paris, Jean Baptiste Massillon, was the son of a minor officer of the law. He was born in the little city of Hyères, a winter resort on the French Riviera, some fifty miles east of Marseilles. He was educated

at the college of the Oratorians in that city. Of that order he became a priest. The warm blood of Provence ran in his veins, and the passions were strong in his soul. When he was asked by one after hearing his sermon on the Prodigal Son, with its searching and minute analysis of the sins of the flesh, where he got so intimate a knowledge of the passions of the sensual, he replied, "Out of my own heart." His youth and early manhood were passed amid scenes of natural beauty which must have had their effect upon a responsive mind. Orange groves, olives and palms, the beauty of the blue Mediterranean, the gay and songful moods of the land of the Troubadours perpetually excited in him the artistic sense. He very early developed the talent for oratory. But when manhood had come, he shrank from its exercise. When he became a priest he made frequent attempts to escape the pulpit. Only by the absolute command of the Superior of his order, did he finally yield to become regularly a preacher.

He is said to have had "an extraordinary witchery of person," a beautiful voice; what Abbé Maury called "an eloquent eye," which Saint Beuve declared, "made for him the most beautiful gestures," since he had little action by way of gesture, when speaking. Add to this his smooth, flowing language and its perfect literary form, and we have the outward elements of his power as a preacher. The general verdict upon Massillon as such, does not differ from that pronounced upon him by Professor Wilkinson:

We know no other instance of a writer, limited in his production strictly to sermons, who holds his place in the first rank of authorship simply by virtue of supreme mastership in literary style.

But that verdict, as I have already suggested, does injustice to the moral and spiritual intensity of his purpose in those same sermons. He will have "nothing of a general and vague morality." He is direct, definite, personal, dealing with the conscience of his hearers, in close-fitting, specific charges. Accepted truths and general propositions he lifts out of the abstract to make them the means of searching his hearers' hearts to the very bottom. His sermon, with all its close-knit, finely polished rhetoric, its "amplifications," as Buffon called them, clause piled on clause in long swinging sentences, in which each additional idea, without once detracting from clarity, contributes its part to the accumulated force of the whole—his sermon, thus built up, is not an end in itself; it is an instrument designed for the conviction and the conversion of his hearers. Intimations to the contrary are not wanting; one critic who shall be nameless, even goes so far as to suggest that

between the preacher and the King some unspoken understanding subsisted which permitted the King to separate the preacher from the man, when Massillon used that great plainness of speech to his sovereign.

But this is not honest criticism. It is innuendo, without a leg of fact to stand on. Such suggestions arise from that fixed prejudice against "art in preaching," which I am soon to attempt to meet and answer.

III

Before proceeding to that endeavor, let us get a sample or two of Massillon's art. He is especially noted for his introductions, technically known as the exordium of the discourse. Much depends on the first three or four minutes. Their importance is only equalled by the last three. To begin happily, impressively, and so to glide easily and naturally into the current of thought; to conclude, not by a series of iterated "finallys," leaving the impression that the preacher has no clear idea of the location of his terminus, but by three or four swift, clean-cut, appealing sentences—these are not minor but major features of the art of preaching.

Perhaps the example of Massillon's felicity in beginning which I am to instance, is only once excelled by an example next to be mentioned. On this first occasion the sermon was preached before Louis XIV, while he was still alive. The text was *"Blessed are they that mourn."* The preacher began thus:

> Sire: If the world were speaking here instead of Jesus Christ, no doubt it would not offer such language as this to your Majesty. Blessed the Prince, it would say, who has never fought but to conquer, who has seen so many powers in arms against him, only to gain glory in granting them peace, who has always been equally greater than danger and greater than victory. . . Thus the world would speak: but, Sire, Jesus does not speak like the world. Blessed, says he to you, not he who is achieving the admiration of his age, but he who is making the world to come his principal concern, and who lives in contempt of himself, and of all that is passing away; because his is the kingdom of heaven.

From that striking initial contrast, he passes through the rest of the Beatitudes with the same effective emphasis between worldly and Christian estimates of blessedness; then ends his introduction with the words,

> These, Sire, are they whom Jesus calls blessed, and the Gospel does not know any other blessedness on earth than virtue and innocence.

The body of the sermon is devoted to exposing the servitude of worldlings, their satiety, their *ennui,* their grossly dissolute lives of excess and debauchery.

The other and greater instance of an introduction so fitted the occasion that its words ever since have been in the minds of men as the supreme instance of the impressive and the apposite in the pulpit. The scene was the funeral of Louis XIV. The immense church was filled with all the chief men of France. On a raised catafalque before the altar lay the body of the king. All about were the emblems and trappings of death. Massillon entered the pulpit with lowered eyes. At length, raising them he swept them in silence over the vast throng, and then let them rest on the bier of the dead king, slowly pronouncing the words of his text from Ecclesiastes, "*I have become great, I have surpassed in glory all who have preceded me in Jerusalem.*" After another long pause, he broke the strain of the suspense, "My brethren, God alone is great." It is said that so electric was the effect of his tone and manner in uttering these four words as to bring, by an instant, simultaneous impulse, the

whole audience to its feet. What more was there to say! The whole lesson of the brevity and extinction of human greatness was in these four words. Will you call it artifice? No! for it was sincere. Will you say it was art? Yes! but the art was concealed in a naturalness and simplicity that made the thought of device or prearrangement impossible. From a remote distance of time we can look back critically and coldly, astonished at the effect. But if we had been there! Should we not have risen impulsively with the rest?

No reference to Massillon's preaching would be sufficing, that omitted the mention of what many regard as his choicest product: the sermons known as "The Little Lent," a series of discourses before the young king and successor to the throne of France, the youthful Louis XV. These have a simplicity and beauty, a plain practical address to the heart, exquisite in their adaptation to the age of him for whom they were prepared, before whom they were spoken. No preaching requires so much the art that hides itself as preaching addressed to children and youth. He who would do it effectively will have to spend pains and labor upon it, if it is not to be, what too often it is, a descent into puerilities and banality. Most young folk are like the child who said he liked Mr. So and So's talking; "because he had no morals." Tell the truth simply, illustrate it skilfully, but omit the "tags." A story told, in the pulpit, to children ought to be so direct in its evident intention as to carry its own moral. The art is in the selection.

The effect of Massillon's preaching to which reference is invariably made is that impression created by the peroration of his sermon on the "Small Number of the Elect," when, after sifting the audience and classifying its sinners, having pictured the sudden appearance of Jesus Christ in the midst of the assembly he was addressing, to pass judgment, to draw the dread line of distinction between the sheep and the goats, he raises the question:

> Do you believe that the majority of us who are here would be set on the right hand? I put the question to you, but you know not; I know not myself. Thou only, O my God, knowest those that belong to Thee! But if we know not those who belong to Him, at least we know that sinners do not belong to Him. [Then, suddenly, like the very blast of the final trumpet itself—] Stand forth now, ye righteous! Where are you? Remnant of Israel, pass to the right hand! True wheat of Jesus Christ, disengage yourself from the chaff doomed to the fire! O God! Where are thine elect? And what remains there for thy portion?

The remarkable record is that when this sermon was preached on two different occasions in Paris; once at the Church of St. Eustache, again in the King's Chapel at Versailles, the effect was in each instance the same—the effect of an unparalleled awe, drawing people up out of their seats, their pale faces, terror in every feature, stretched forward to the preacher, who himself stood silently before them, with head bowed in an attitude of dejection. One quotes the sermon not to demur, but to state the recorded facts of the impress it twice made upon hearers of more than ordinary intelligence, and not a little self-control.

IV

Where, then, better than here, can we leave Massillon and his audience, to go on to discuss the subject of Art in Preaching, as suggested by him and his compeers.

Let us try to see how this question of art in preaching is far more than merely a question of rhetoric or elocution. I make the claim that the preacher is as truly an artist, when he understands his business, and is in the way of succeeding in it, as either painter, or sculptor, or architect, or any craftsman whatsoever. Preaching is not only an art; it is the finest of the fine arts. The preacher's tool is truth—"the truth as it is in Jesus"; the medium he works in is the living soul; his purpose is plastic, formative, that earthliness may be transformed into heavenliness, as Christ is formed in men, the hope of glory. When his aim is truly accomplished the "beauty of holiness" is the issue of his toil. What art can compare with his? The painter's picture, the sculptor's statue, the architect's temple, the craftsman's product are but life's semblance. The preacher's effect is life itself—life higher and more abundant.

Browning's Fra Lippo Lippi, the painter-monk, extolling the artist's opportunity to make men love "things they have passed a hundred times, nor cared to see," declares

> Art was given for that—
> God uses us to help each other so,
> Lending our minds out. . .

But then goes on to admit the preacher's pre-eminence as artist,

> . . . How much more
> If I drew higher things with the same truth!
> That were to take the Prior's pulpit place,
> Interpret God to all of you.

Nevertheless, even so consummate a preacher as Phillips Brooks will have none of this. He asserts in his *Yale Lectures on Preaching* that

> the definite and immediate purpose which a sermon has set before it makes it impossible to consider it a work of art. . . It knows no essential and eternal type, but its law for what it ought to be comes from the needs and fickle changes of the man for whom it lives. Now this is thoroughly inartistic. . . Art knows nothing of the tumultuous eagerness of purpose.

And again, " The simple work of art is the pure utterance of beautiful form without further purpose than simply that it should be uttered." This is " Art for art's sake," with a degree of *obiter dictum,* to which few artists would assent and which the whole history of art in relation to religion contradicts. " Art for Life's sake " is a nobler view, and in that sense the sermon has every reason for being in its best and most effective form a work of art.

" The preacher is an artist of the soul," said Mr. Beecher, himself an exemplification of his epigram. If I were asked to name two sermons which justify that claim, I should allege two of Phillips Brooks' own sermons, the one on " The Wings of the Seraphim," from the text in Isaiah 6, " With twain he

covered his face, with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly"; and the other on "The Symmetry of Life," from the text in Revelation 21, "The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal." Both sermons are all but perfect in form, both are aimed at the exaltation and ennobling of life, both are radiant with the beauty of truth and the truth of beauty—each glows with the ardor and enthusiasm of a prophet bent on interpreting God to man, that the beauty and harmony of the divine may glorify the hearer in the ways of humility, reverence, and service (the sermon from Isaiah), of self-expression, brotherhood and aspiration (the sermon from the Revelation). Moreover, Brooks is not always consistent with himself in this matter of art in preaching. In the second of his lectures on "The Teaching of Religion," he has this:

> What I have said of music applies I think to all the graces and appealing tones of the preacher's art. There is a music of preaching. What the melody of a hymn is to the words that the eloquence of the preacher is to his truth.

In like vein is the comment of his near neighbor and close friend, Dr. George Gordon, on the preaching of Brooks:

> He chose as indispensable for his calling to let the artist in him prevail, to do all his thinking through the forms of the imagination and to give truth a body corresponding as far as possible to its own ineffable beauty. Thus it happens that sermons with the noblest form . . . and the finest artistic quality have come from his mind.

The subtle reason for the prejudice against art in preaching is the feeling entertained by many that art and artificiality are necessarily synonymous, which is not true. Nor is art to be confused with what is merely artful in the sense of trick and cunning. The preacher is the last man who ought to "play fantastic tricks before high heaven." The art of the actor is imitative. But the preacher is not an impersonator, he is a persuader. His aim is not to please but to convince, convert, and save. His truth must be so arranged, adapted, presented as to grip the mind, arouse the conscience, awaken the emotions, kindle the imagination, and start the will. Some one has said that the true sermon must have "truth for its staple, good taste for its form, and persuasion to act for its end." I venture to suggest that "good taste" is too tame a phrase to keep company with the other members of the triplet. It lacks the keen, positive urge required, if sermon form is to match and minister the practical end for which alone the sermon is to be preached. "Artistic judgment as to form" would be a better phrase, since, according to the dictionary, "Art is the systematic application of knowledge and skill in effecting a desired result."

But there is another side to the matter of art in preaching. John Keats suggests it in his lines,

> . . . Beauty is truth, truth beauty,
> That is all we know, or need to know.

Nothing is more certain than this: In the revelation He has made of himself and of his will, in the Bible,

God has made clear that beauty is inherent in himself, and in his truth. The "beauty of the Lord our God be upon us," prayed the Psalmist. The author of the apocryphal book of "Wisdom" declares, with warrant of canonical Scripture, that "the Lord God is the first author of Beauty." From his hand come the wonder and the lovelinesses of the world that is our home. "Nature is the Art of God," said Sir Thomas Browne. And the Word of Scripture that makes God known, is, from first page to last, thronged with the beauty of truth and of the language that conveys truth. The truth itself has vital beauty, in the harmony of its separate phases and in its symmetry as a glorious whole. In its progressive unfolding, the truth of redemption, which is the sum and substance of Scripture, is as beautiful as a growing, living tree; in its final fulness it issues in the beauty of a holy temple of the Lord.

As to the vesture of the truth in the Scriptures, has language in any other sphere of thought approached its varied forms of loveliness and grace, ranging through its history, biography, laws, poetry, Wisdom forms, Gospel, epistle, apocalypse, from the story of the earth's beginnings in Genesis, to the forecasts of the final glory of the Holy City, in the Revelation? And this, whatever the different tongues of men into which the word-forms of the Bible have passed. The truth loses none of its truth and little of its beauty in the transfer from one speech to another.

And what of the Word made flesh, dwelling among

men? Some one has called Jesus "The Beautiful Galilean." I fear it is one of those condescending tributes, so often uttered, by those who refuse our Lord the highest homage and the fullest faith. But it expresses a great truth notwithstanding:

> For so the Word had breath, and wrought
> With human hands the creed of creeds,
> In loveliness of perfect deeds.

In appreciation of the beauty of the world about him none has approached Jesus in the spirituality of that appreciation, seeing with the inner eyes and tracing all to God its Source. In the men and women and children around him he found beauties where others saw only deformities of character, and capacities for beauty and its appreciation, in those who to others made no appeal. As to speech, "Never man spake like this man." This is true as to his tone of authority primarily, but it is equally true of the form and language of his utterances. He is the true and supreme example of what art means for the preacher—the art that conceals itself so completely that it seems not to be there; the art that in him was intuitive, spontaneous, and free by the supremacy of his nature; but which in us, is the fruit, at last, of forgotten toil and travail, search and trial, becoming second nature, at our remove from him, only after long years of practise and discipline. What pictures he could draw, and in how few words! Witness that description of the storm at the close of the Sermon on the Mount. How few, simple,

short the words, yet how vivid the portrayal. You can almost hear the wind blow, the rain fall, and the floods surge. And the art of the reiteration! One house rock-founded and secure, however buffeted; and again the storm, before which the other is swept to its fall—so great the fall of it, you can all but hear the crash. But the portrayal is not for its own sake. The aim is persuasion to obedience, with a solemn warning against the folly and peril of its opposite. Or again, that vivid picture of the children in the market-place, calling unto their fellows, "We have piped unto you and ye have not danced, we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented"—the stirring street scene is an ironic reproach of the generation that slandered equally the ascetic John and the social Jesus, with the gnomic application, "Wisdom is justified of her children." Or, once more, that Hogarthian reproduction of the revelry before the flood, to be paralleled in the day of the Coming of the Son of man: "They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage," up to the last hour of opportunity for escape, "knowing not until the flood came and took them all away." The Gospels are a veritable gallery of such pictures.

The same is true of his parables: Every one is a masterpiece of speech to a given end; every stroke contributory; not a single redundance; nothing for ornament merely, everything for the end in view. What precision of outline, condensation of thought and language! What truth to local custom, what play

of local color! What rhythm of movement, what skill in grouping the actors in the scene. Sings John Keats of the lovers on his "Grecian Urn":

> Forever thou wilt love and she be fair.

But far more truly must we say of the Master's parables, Forever, in the ministry of the word, will the sower be striding across his field, committing his seed to the hap of his soil; the Shepherd be carrying home his lost sheep, and the woman be clutching her recovered coin, with rejoicing neighbors all about; the prodigal be wending home to his waiting, welcoming father, while the elder brother stands without, a taunt on his lip, a scowl on his face. Forever the foolish virgins will bewail at that shut door; and that other guest bidden to a marriage, but not robed for it, will stand speechless before the challenge, "How camest thou in hither not having on a wedding garment?"

Michelangelo's vast Sistine fresco of the Last Judgment is overpowering to sense, with its titanic, colorful portrayals; but it pales to insignificance before the austere sentences of our Lord's parable of that final scene, so restrained in its appeal to the imagination, so simple in its outlines, so suggestive of joy in its welcome of the blessed, so awesome in its foreshadowing of the eternal woe of the doomed.

How much our Lord could pack into a sentence; how concrete are his single words! Whose wooing note is so winning as his? How his rebukes blaze! Even his woes are pictorial, voicing themselves in

such phrases as whited sepulchers, despoiled widow's houses, calling up images of gnats and camels and garden herbs.

And you will notice that these all are not purple patches upon our Lord's speech; they are not illustrations thrust into his discourses. They are of the very warp and woof of his utterance. Beecher said, "An illustration is a window in an argument, it lets in light." But the house of our Lord's speech was glass all about, light on every side, transparent as to the sense, needing no other illumination than its own clarity, no other adornment than its own vital beauty. De Quincey, in his *Rhetoric,* says of Burke, that he "thought in and by his figures . . . not as laying them on, by way of enamel or after-ornament." It was so our Lord thought and spoke.

Will any one object that it is little less than an impertinence to speak of this as art? Does it not, you ask, impugn our Lord's sincerity, to do so? Does it not misrepresent the spontaneity, the straight, the sacred, the instant reality of his ministry? But how is that so? What are some of the canons of art? Are they not such as these: Observation, the eye on the object; selection, that the image be not overburdened with detail; line, for definition of contour; space, for clear display of form; contrast, of light and shade; harmony, in group effects; rhythm, or proportion of the parts; tone, the atmosphere, in which the whole is bathed. What if our Lord, by the very law of his own being (without the toil and

study, plan and purpose that we must give if we are approximately to achieve) fulfilled these laws of all art, whether rhetorical, pictorial, plastic or structural? What is that to say but that he was the world's great genius in speech? Head and forefront of the race, in this as in all else, the Man who spake as never man spoke, before or since; our Master and Example in this as in everything. Let not his plus-perfect discourage us. Rather say with that humble artist confronting a masterpiece, "I, too, am an artist," and give a whole self to the uttermost in the struggle to be one.

Can Art in its more restricted sense, contribute anything to the preacher's art? Can it help to vivify his truth, to intensify his persuasions? Yea, verily! Live with some reproduction of Hoffmann's "Boy Christ" before you, and he will preach you many a sermon about the Father's business of waiting and working till the hour strikes, his lovely young face a constant plea for wondering patience. Even a common photograph of Hacker's "The Annunciation to Mary" (the original hangs in the Tate Gallery in London) will stir you to deep appreciation of the Incarnation—its provincial simplicity of circumstance, its holy, awesome mystery of Motherhood through the Holy Spirit; the naturalness of its supernaturalness—as no conventionalized medieval art could possibly do, and certainly as no dogmatic or critical polemic concerning it can. I once used to preach the crucifixion scene after the manner of Munkacsy's stark and anatomical

picture of the impaled Christ, to be seen in the gallery at Dresden; a huge, nude, crude reproduction of physical anguish. But never did I view or preach Christ crucified in that *genre* after I had seen Carrieré's picture of the Crucifixion which hangs in the Luxembourg in Paris. His manner was to paint everything he saw behind a veil of mist. He sought and found in a semitransparent gloom the elusive spirit of things, of forms, of events. In his "Crucifixion" picture all is withdrawn into a background of shadow. The event is not merely in the background, it is the background; in front, a veil, misty, ethereal; behind, the cross. Thus subtly is borne in upon one that the significance of the Cross of Jesus is remote from sense perception, beyond the reach of the critical reason, hidden as its secrets are in the mind and heart of the Eternal. As an ancient litany suggests, we must plead for our forgiveness not merely the known, but far more the unknown sufferings of Christ.

Can Architecture add aught to the preacher's art? Why not? Who that has seen that great façade which Ruskin called "the Bible of Amiens," with its so recessed great door, glorious with sculptured saints and heroes of the Scriptures, but has remembered there how art has fairly wreaked itself upon the doorways of the world to make them beautiful, from mere colonial houses, to stately edifices of commerce, or of worship; and then has come away, feeling how intimately the door is associated with life's human interests, its labor, joy, and sorrow, its bereavement and

its beatitude. Through the door go out and in the workers to and from their tasks; the worshipers to and from their devotions; the bride to her marriage; the corpse to the burial. Is there, then, no revelation, there, of the God of the threshold, whose assurance is, "The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth, and even for evermore"? Let Jesus put his great "I am" before the door, and there emerge at once thoughts of himself, as the point of entrance to the Life indeed; the means of exit to all service that enlarges and saves; the instrument of separation between those who enter, and those who refuse to go in through him; with glimpse of that ominous, final word, "The door was shut."

I have left to last the supreme word about Art in Preaching. We are the servants of the unseen and eternal. I spent, once, the hours of a Sunday afternoon in that room of the gallery in Dresden, in which the Sistine Madonna of Raphael is shown. The room is relatively small. It is without windows. Only draperies cover its walls; no other picture is there; but on its easel, lighted artificially from above, the canvas, which some regard as the masterpiece of the world, presents that marvelous mother and still more marvelous child, to all who enter. No reproduction of the picture can possibly suggest the heavenly air which seemed to me that day to envelop them and which, somehow, shone with peculiar brilliance from the baby's eyes, till it filled the room with a subdued splendor. One after another peasants came in their

Sunday best, chattering to the door, only to doff instantly the hat, drop into silence as they entered, to stand awhile in reverent awe of spirit before the marvel.

This, or something very like it, is the Minister's function. He is to bring for the illumination of the problems of earth and sin and salvation this light of heaven, revealed in Jesus Christ. It is his to view and present every truth in the atmosphere of the invisible world; to correlate it with the Eternal. To this end his life, his effort, his very art, must be disciplined in the school of prayer. It is there the artist becomes radiant in his own personality with the truth, that then becomes life in himself. There face to face with his Lord, he learns the inner secret of power, achieves the uttermost devotion to his art of persuasion, till he can humbly say with his Master, in a degree, very small, but real: "I am the truth; my message and myself are one." Radiant, glowing, passionate, he comes forth to confront the souls he would mold into the beauty of holiness, sure of himself, sure of his message, sure of his method, sure of his Master's guiding and empowering Spirit; confident, as Jean Francois Millet said, that he can "touch others" with the pulse of life, the thrill of feeling, that have so moved him in secret. The unseen Angelus bell has rung for him, also; power and grace transfigure him for his task in answer to his prayer. He knows, now, he can get a verdict for his message. Intent, surcharged with the energy of the Spirit that is upon him,

he is yet poised and in peace. For him is answered that ancient prayer of Socrates at the close of the *Phædrus,* but in a far higher and Christian sense, "Give me beauty in the inward soul, and may the outward and the inward man be at one."

VI

JEREMY TAYLOR

(1613–1667)

PREACHING AND IMAGINATION

JEREMY TAYLOR

I

In his *Stanzas from the Grand Chartreuse* Matthew Arnold speaks of himself as "wandering between two worlds—one dead, the other powerless to be born." It is a fine example of imagination at its best. If the paraphrase were not somewhat forced, one might say of Jeremy Taylor that for eleven years he fluttered between two kings—one dead by violence; the other not yet permitted to occupy his throne. Charles the First was beheaded in 1649, when Taylor was thirty-six years of age, and before he had begun to do his major work. Charles the Second returned from exile to occupy the throne of his father in 1660, when Taylor had only seven years to live. In the interval Oliver Cromwell ruled the English Commonwealth. Presbyterianism and Independency were the favored religious faiths; Episcopacy and the former ecclesiastical Establishment were in a state of suspense. As a royalist and a preacher of the Church of England, Jeremy was under suspicion, compelled to find refuge where he might, and support for his family as he could. In this period he toiled industriously, suffered not a little, produced his best sermons, wrote and published his chief works.

He was born in Cambridge in 1613. His father was a barber, but a man able to teach his son the elements

of mathematics and grammar. His early education was secured in the free-school of the city of his birth. From the start of his studies he displayed utmost precocity. He was "ripe for the university before custom would allow of his admittance." At thirteen he was permitted to enter Caius College, Cambridge. Taking the studies in course, he graduated and became a Fellow at twenty. "He was a man," said his successor, Doctor Rust, at his funeral, "long afore he was of age." It is to this memorial sermon, admirable alike in its restraint and its enthusiasm, that all who have written about Taylor have been deeply indebted for information and estimate alike. Even Bishop Heber who edited the whole works of Taylor, prefacing the edition with a life and critical study, falls back upon Doctor Rust's sermon. Let the latter, in his own quaint fashion, describe for us the entry of the young prodigy, after his ordination, upon a brief experience as preacher to a London audience:

> From the university, by that time he was Master of Arts, he removed to London, and became public lecturer in the Church of St. Paul's, where he preached to the admiration and astonishment of his auditory, and by his florid and youthful beauty, and sweet and pleasant air, and sublime and raised discourses, he made his hearers take him for some young angel, newly descended from the visions of glory. The fame of this new star, that outshone all the rest of the firmament, came to the notice of the great Archbishop of Canterbury who would needs have him preach before him, which he performed not less to his wonder than satisfaction; his discourse was beyond exception and beyond imitation; yet the wise prelate thought him too young; but the great youth humbly begged his Grace to pardon that fault, and promised, if he lived, he would mend it.

The extract is long; but how vivid; how naïve is its admiration! The upshot of it was that Archbishop Laud sent the "young angel" to All Souls College, Oxford, that his wings might grow and his mind mature.

> It was [Laud said] for the advantage of the world, that such mighty parts should be afforded better opportunities of study and improvement than a course of constant preaching would allow.

He grew to be held in high affection and esteem at Oxford. "Love and admiration still waited upon him," and the appreciation "of his extraordinary worth and sweetness" was universal there. To the end of his life he returned to the University with interest, and was always welcomed. Shortly after the Civil War broke out, King Charles, whose chaplain he had become, suggested that the doctor's degree should be conferred upon him by the University. It was promptly bestowed. His learning abundantly merited such an honor. Few men in England had a wider acquaintance with the classics and with patristic literature; some excelled him in theological learning and penetration of intellect; but none was his equal as a preacher and writer. No man in England then, or for years after, could write English as he could. His only rival (in a very different style) was Thomas Fuller. In his twenty-fifth year he was appointed by Laud rector of the church in Uppingham, Rutlandshire. It was his home until he left for the war to fulfil his duties as royal chaplain with the army. In his parish work at Uppingham he is described as "a rare

conductor of souls who knew how to counsel and to advise, to solve difficulties, and determine cares, and quiet consciences." All of which we should be ready to infer from the nature and contents of his published books. Those of them that are devotional or casuistical, may be designated as always pastoral in aim. Even that prodigy of a book, dealing exclusively with cases of conscience, known as *Ductor Dubitantium,* while full of strange instances, dealing with every conceivable case of doubtful conscience, is as truly the work of a pastor versed in every kind of personal difficulty, as it is a *tour de force* of practical wisdom.

With the defeat of the royal cause and the execution of the king, Taylor lost his place at Uppingham. His house was plundered; his family ejected. While the army had been in Wales he had met the Earl of Carbery, who now made him his household chaplain, at the spacious and stately mansion known as " Golden Grove," in Carmarthenshire. Here Taylor spent ten years in retirement from the excitements of the period. He was not always secure against interference, but escaped, for a time, serious molestation. I think we must, again, let Rust spread his fancy over the scene, and Jeremy's employments there:

He and his little fortune were shipwrecked in that great hurricane that overturned both Church and State: this fatal storm cast him ashore in a private corner of the world, and a tender providence shrouded him under her wings, and the prophet was fed in the wilderness; and his great worthiness procured him friends, that supplied him with bread and necessaries. In this solitude he began to write those excellent discourses which are

enough of themselves to furnish a library, and will be famous to all succeeding generations for their greatness of wit, and profoundness of judgment, and richness of fancy, and clearness of expression, and copiousness of invention, and general usefulness to all the purposes of a Christian.

II

It may add to the attraction of Taylor for us, and possibly win some one to a study of his great product, in fifteen volumes of most varied thought and wide range of interests, every page rewarding for the student of style, if I let Bishop Heber introduce him more personally:

The comeliness of his person has been often noticed, and he himself appears to have been not insensible of it. Few authors have so frequently introduced their own portraits, in different characters and attitudes, as ornaments to their printed works. . . He appears to have been about the middle size, strongly and handsomely proportioned, with his hair long and gracefully curling on his cheeks, large, dark eyes, full of sweetness, an aquiline nose, and an open and intelligent countenance. . . Few men who have expressed their opinions so strongly, and, sometimes, so unguardedly as he has done, have lived and died with so much praise and so little censure. Much of this felicity may probably be referred to an engaging appearance and a pleasing manner; but its cause must be sought in a still greater degree, in an evident kindliness of heart . . . in a temper warm, but easily conciliated, . . . in a total forgetfulness of all selfish feeling. . . Other men have been as religious, as regular in their devotions, but with Taylor, his duty seemed to have been a delight, his piety a passion. His faith was the more vivid in proportion as his fancy was more intensely vigorous. With him the objects of his hope and reverence were scarcely unseen or future; his imagination daily conducted him to "diet with gods," and "elevated him to a height above the world, and nearness to ineffable things."

It is the same story that we are learning in the study of all these great exemplars of our ministry. Their power with men, their fervor, elevation, and effectiveness as preachers, came from their enswathement in the atmosphere of the Unseen and Eternal; from the way in which their devotional imagination enabled them to see themselves, their hearers, and the great truths of revelation, in a "light that never was on sea or land"; from the further fact that the same faculty of imagination, working creatively, was able to carry over to others an apprehension of the realities which the senses alone can never compass. In the possession and use of this faculty, Jeremy Taylor is one of the greatest of all the men who, by means of it, have made the pulpit a throne of power.

All who have studied Taylor agree in this estimate of his characteristic quality as a writer and preacher. Referring to his fervor men have called him "The English Chrysostom." Recognizing the place of imagination in his style they have named him "The Shakespeare of English prose." Coleridge was charmed with "the majesty of his great and lovely mind"; with his

> genuine imagination, and its streaming force unifying all, at one moment, like that of the setting sun when, through an interspace of blue sky no larger than itself, it emerges from the cloud to sink behind the mountain.

Could there be a happier comparison, from Nature, for the mingling lights and shadows and colorful splendors of Taylor's manner of expressing his

thought? Edmund Gosse, now probably the most highly regarded of English critics, and Taylor's latest biographer, thinks " the solemn art " of Jeremy Taylor rises near heaven, to " come within ear-shot of sublime music," so " shining and seraphical " is it.

III

No part of Jeremy's product will better repay attention than his devotional. He was preeminently a man of prayer. Prayers of his own composition, scattered here and there in his books, prefacing or concluding his sermons, and the chapters of that unique devotional study of the Gospels called " The Great Exemplar," will reward your study with an enrichment of your ability to pray, intelligently, comprehensively, and even passionately for those whose worship you must lead in the pulpit. These prayers are proof, if any is needed, that written or printed prayers may be winged for heaven, fervent, even to anguish, with passionate penitence; or glowing with a spirit of adoration and gratitude that only angels may excel. Nothing cold, or stilted, is there in these devotions, elaborated with care, but born of self-scrutiny, of love for Christ, of longings for holiness; even the page that carries them seems phosphorescent as we read. While they may not justify Taylor's invincible prejudice against impromptu and extemporaneous prayers, they give a barbed point to Jeremy's sarcastic question, to contemporary Puritan objectors to liturgy, " Why should the Holy Spirit fly from us at the

sight of an inkhorn?" To him, prayer was "the dressing of his soul by confessions, meditations, and attendances upon God." Formal as he thought devotion ought to be, he loved "to make frequent colloquies or short discoursings between God and the soul." His faith in prayer was never paralyzed by doubts, or queries, as to its possibility in a world ordered by law. Hear this passage, at once an example of his confidence in the power and sway of prayer as a force, and of the way in which his style can sometimes disrobe itself of magnificence, and stride, swift and nervous, to its end:

> Holy prayer procures the ministry and service of angels. It rescinds the decrees of God. It cures sicknesses and obtains pardon. It arrests the sun in its course, and stays the wheels of the chariot of the moon. It rules over all God's creatures, and opens and shuts the storehouses of rain. It unlocks the cabinet of the womb, and quenches the violence of fire. It stops the mouths of lions, and reconciles our sufferance and weak faculties with the violence of torment and sharpness of persecution. It pleases God and supplies all our needs. But prayer that can do this much for us can do nothing at all without holiness, for God heareth not sinners, but if any man be a worshiper of God and doth his will, him he heareth.

There is another phase of Taylor's piety that is useful for us. He was much a sufferer. He knew the hardships and anxieties of persecution. He was thrice imprisoned—once as a captive in war, twice for reasons unknown—possibly, for debt. He knew for one period how nipping is the pinch of poverty when it is extreme. He experienced sore bereavements; first, the death of his patroness, Lady Carbery, the

kind and generous hostess of his earlier stay at Golden Grove. If you would learn what a funeral address ought to be (if you have to make one; which may heaven forbid, more and more) read Taylor's sermon for Lady Carbery. It is no panegyric but a grateful, graceful, discriminating appreciation of a noble woman. To this bereavement was added the death of his wife and the loss within a short time of three of his children. But hear his doctrine of the merits of adversity and catch the shimmer of his style as you listen:

> Softness is for slaves and beasts, for minstrels and useless persons, for such who cannot ascend higher than the state of a fair ox or a servant entertained for vainer offices; but the man that designs his son for nobler employments—to honors and to triumphs, to consular dignities and presidencies of counsels—loves to see him pale with study or panting with labor, hardened with suffrance, or eminent by dangers. And so God dresses us for heaven. He loves to see us struggling with a disease, and resisting the devil, and contesting against the weaknesses of nature, and against hope to believe in hope—resigning ourselves to God's will, praying him to choose for us and dying in all things but faith and its blessed consequents. . . For so have I known the boisterous north wind pass through the yielding air, which opened its bosom, and appeased its violence, by entertaining it with easy compliance in all the region of its reception. But when the same breath of heaven hath been checked with the stiffness of a tower, or the united strength of a wood, it grew mighty, and dwelt there and made the highest branches stoop and make a smooth path for it on the top of all its glories.

Both the sermons and the other writings of Taylor are glorious with such inwoven images of his thought, as this one of the north wind. Until you have re-

garded it closely you will think it nothing but a purple patch on the texture of the thought. But examination will show that it is the result of close observation on a windy day. The eye saw the wind swallowed by the yielding air in front, and then observed the contrast when resistance was offered. The imagination immediately seized upon the fact observed and then turned it to the uses of spiritual appeal. Take another instance:

So have I seen a rose newly springing from the clefts of its hood, and at first it was fair as the morning, and full with the dew of heaven as a lamb's fleece; but when a ruder breath had forced open its virgin modesty, and dismantled its too youthful and unripe retirements, it began to put on darkness, and to decline to softness and the symptoms of a sickly age; it bowed the head, and broke its stalk, and at night, having lost some of its leaves and all its beauty, it fell into the portion of weeds and outworn faces. The same is the portion of every man and every woman.

One more instance, if your forbearance permits. Example often persuades where precept fails. This time it is also of prayer he is speaking.

So have I seen a lark rising from his bed of grass, and soaring upward, singing as he rises, and hoping to get the heaven and climb above the clouds; but the poor bird was beaten back by the loud sighings of an eastern wind, and his motion made irregular and inconstant, descending more at every breath of the tempest than it could recover by the vibration and frequent weighing of its wings, till the little creature was forced to sit down and pant and stay till the storm was over, and then it made a prosperous flight, and did rise and sing as if it had learnt music and the motion of an angel as he passed through the air about his ministries below. So is the prayer of a good man.

If these examples seem overlong and a bit overwrought, see how brief he can be, and what beauty he can put into a line or two of exact truth, by giving to it the power of a similitude:

> Jesus was like the rainbow, which God set in the clouds as a sacrament to confirm a promise and establish a grace. He was made half of the glories of the light and half of the moisture of a cloud. In his best days he was but half triumph and half sorrow.

So have we seen imagination at work weaving patterns of beauty and pictures of truth in the fabric of Taylor's speech. You have noted that "I have seen" so repeatedly prefacing the picture he is to produce. Read John Bunyan, and you will observe that, different diametrically, as his style is from Taylor's, he too is repeating again and again, "I saw, "I saw," "I saw." Gosse finely says of Taylor, "He feeds the arteries of his imagination with a constant flow of personal observation." He, and the poets all, were men who walked abroad with open eyes, and, at once, "the top of their minds," as the middle-age men called the imagination, began to work upon the scene or object the eye garnered. "The style of Taylor," says Doctor Gosse, "was sensorial, he did not begin to write well until he saw with distinctness." His sermons are rich with the fruit of his seeing: Light and water, the purl of a spring, the flight or the song of a bird, the flowering or the fading of a tree—these and hundreds more of such objects great and small, come into his discourse not to illustrate but actually to carry his thought.

To study his sermons is to see how this faculty operates on the wider scene of the Scriptures and the world of books. Everywhere his keen eye and swift mind range and like bees come back laden with honey.

It would not be just, however, to omit some reference to Taylor's interest in things domestic, as displayed in his sermons, especially in the triad called "The Marriage Ring." His counsels to husbands and wives are earnest and kindly. The sweet atmosphere of home is there. In touching upon the frictions and antagonisms between man and wife he has a light and humorous way. But one passage of his about the unwisdom of some mothers in cosseting their children I want to quote because it is so striking an example of the way in which Taylor's style can wholly leave the highlands and become plain and homely even to roughness:

> They soften them with kisses and imperfect noises, with the pap and breast milk of soft endearments. They rescue them from tutors and snatch them from discipline. They desire to keep them fat and warm and their feet dry and their bellies full—and then the children govern and cry and prove fools and troublesome as long as the feminine republic does endure.

Query: What did Mrs. Taylor think of such sentiments?

In the matter of quotation from classical writers Taylor is no little at fault. Not because he quotes them, but that they are in a foreign tongue, and must have been unintelligible to some of his hearers. Not to all, of course! For that little Chapel of the Golden

Grove estate held not merely Welsh rustics and domestic servants but men from a neighboring school and squires of the vicinage who would understand. It was the fashion of the age to make such a show of learning. The quotations are felicitous enough, if they were understood. But there are too many of them; as, also, of his images, similies, and metaphors. His style even at its simplest and best, is overladen with ornament, not consciously used for such purpose, but because his mind worked that way and no other. The effect, says Doctor Hering, is of the "prodigality of an Eastern woman laden with pearls." Another of Taylor's idiosyncrasies is his occasional fondness for strange, unusual words. Here are a few of them: lipothymy, eutaxy, dyscracy, coloquintidia, discalceate, irriguous, redargue, threnes, prejudicate used as an adjective. They are all to be found in large dictionaries, but generally marked obsolete.

For these and other reasons, Taylor is no man for a modern preacher to follow slavishly. Indeed, few are so endowed as to be able to follow him. When all his trumpets are blowing, and, in response, he is in the rush and torrent of his charge, not an army with banners is more exciting to the hearer, or the reader. When he is on his quiet way across the plain, after the fashion of the humdrum life of every day, one has the same pleasure in him that is felt beside a flowing stream. When in the darker hours, as in his "Holy Dying," he sets the sparkles of his consolations aglow, one has the joy that stars shining in the

night sky ever bring. But when, with the awful sense of what Doomsday may mean to men, he searches the innermost secrets of heart and conscience, and summons all his imagination can supply to paint the terrors of "that day of wrath, that dreadful day," we tremble before the Lord and meekly supplicate his mercy. Whatever way he wends, and whatsoever treasure he carries with him, his aim is always spiritual and his message evangelical. Some of his contemporaries thought him theologically unsound in some of his views and obsessions. He is forever declaiming against the folly and insecurity of death-bed repentance. He set theologians aflutter by his denial of "original sin." But no hearer ever went away from his message, unconvinced of his sincere desire to help, to comfort, and to save his fellow men.

Come to him then, as I hope you will, for a study in the significance, the effectiveness, the methods of that faculty, without a due exercise of which your ministry can only be in part; in proportion as imagination is wanting it can be only in small part. Your style be your own! To use Stevenson's phrase, Be the "sedulous ape" of no man. But put yourself to school with Nature, Literature, Poetry especially, that this gift of God may be stirred up within you—

This inward sense of the soul [as Thomas Fuller called it], its most boundless and restless faculty, which free from all engagements, digs without spade, flies without wings, builds without charges, in a moment striding from the center to the circumference of the world!

Let imagination enter with you the place of prayer, to visualize for you the Face of your Redeemer, as you have learned him in the Gospels. Let her sit beside you in your study. Dig for your message, till you know you have gotten hid treasure, cleansed of dross. Then let the Scholar become the Seer as imagination gives you to see your truth alive; so much alive that your heart glows under the sway of what the mind ponders. If you sit down to write, let imagination sift your words. As Dr. R. W. Dale said:

> The imaginative speaker instinctively rejects words, phrases, symbols which are incapable of being animated with vital warmth. His style is alive in every fiber of it.

Only imagination can set logic on fire, helping you to carry over your argument from the reason to the will of your hearers; and none but this Seeress of the Soul can give you visions of your audience before you face it, and so stir your heart about its needs, as to give adaptation, direction, and compassion to your message.

IV

The last days of Jeremy Taylor, after the Restoration, were days when some honor and recognition came to him; but nothing such as both his abilities and his loyalty to the royalist cause warranted him and his friends to expect. He was not offered high place in England, but was sent to Ireland. He was made Bishop of Derry and Down, with Dromore afterward

added. He was able to exert a large usefulness in the reorganization and reinvigoration of the Dublin University. He preached official sermons which scarcely rank with those earlier Golden Grove deliverances in either sweetness or strength. He gave earnest and very urgent advice to his subordinates in the diocese; two sermons on the "Moral Duties of Ministers" evidencing his sense of watch-care and responsibility.

To the amazement of every one who had read the innovating treatise of his earlier days, on *The Liberty of Prophesying,* he now turned persecutor. Strange it is that when men come to power they will forget their principles. This really great tractate of Taylor's early ministry deserves a word at our hands. It is a message needed in our own day. *The Liberty of Prophesying* is a plea for peace in the church; a protest against calling every disliked opinion by the name of heresy. Toleration must not be founded upon agreement or compromise, but upon "a broad basis of practical piety." Let fanatics look to the humane and merciful doctrine of Jesus Christ, "whose lessons were softer than nard, or the juice of the Candian olive." Distinctively a Tayloresque bit! It is unreasonable to prescribe other men's faith. It is iniquitous to persecute differing opinions. Papists, Anabaptists, Sacramentaries, may be fools and wicked, but that is no excuse for ferocity against them. For the time when it was written the book was a startling contrast to current opinion and practise. It is less brilliant in style than some later books of his. The subject called for

reasons, not flights of fancy. It made no little stir in its day. It has been read and praised in every generation since. On account of it Taylor has been adjudged great, by men who had little sympathy with his theology, or his aims as a divine. But, as I said, it is surprising to find him, as a bishop, in that always fermenting and furious North of Ireland, forsaking these principles, and proceeding against men of Non-Conformist faith. Doubtless these Presbyterians and Independents were troublesome and irritating folk; the people less so than their ministers. The latter were implacable against Taylor and his plans for the bishopric. His own words describe what he had to endure at their hands:

> They threaten to murder me. They use all the arts they can to disgrace me, and to take the people's hearts from me, and to make my life uncomfortable and useless to the services of his Majesty and the Church. It were better for me to be a poor curate in a village church than a bishop over such intolerable persons.

But Jeremy gave them better than they sent. Whenever he could he displaced them from their pulpits. Not even Bramhall, who was named the Irish Laud, exceeded Taylor in severity and violence toward the Presbyterian ministers. Henry Leslie, Taylor's predecessor, had compared the Independents and the Presbyterians to the thieves between whom our Lord was crucified. If we are to judge by Jeremy's conduct he too thought so of them. Once again, in these studies, we are looking at a black spot upon a shining sun.

Saintliness and sense are not proof against the opportunity to persecute for opinion, when it arises; not even in the author of *The Liberty of Prophesying.*

Notwithstanding, Jeremy Taylor was a great soul and a great Christian. He had the tongue of the learned, the pen of a ready writer, the pure heart of them that see God. Doctor Rust, whom I have two or three times quoted, ends his fine sermon, at the funeral, with words that are not offensively but pardonably enthusiastic. He had shared Taylor's confidence, joined in his labors, knew him at close hand and loved him from a full heart. You will not object to hear his encomium for our closing word. It successfully imitates Jeremy's best style:

"This great prelate had the good humor of a gentleman, the eloquence of an orator, the fancy of a poet . . . the wisdom of a councillor, and the sagacity of a prophet . . . the piety of a saint. He had devotion enough for a cloister, learning enough for a university, and wit enough for a college of *virtuosi*. . . He is fixed in an orb of glory and shines among his brethren—stars that in their several ages gave light to the world and turned many souls unto righteousness. We that are left behind, though we can never reach his perfections, must study to imitate his virtues, that we may at last come to sit at his feet in the mansions of glory."

VII

CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON
(1834–1892)

PREACHING AND EVANGELISM

CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON

I

Other distinguished names in the history of evangelism might have been chosen as the subject of this lecture. John Wesley and George Whitefield come to mind, at once, as contemporary eighteenth-century gospelers. Each was an Oxford graduate; each an ordained clergyman of the English established Church. Together they effected an evangelical revival in England, the results of which are felt to this day, in both that and this land. Each of them visited America. Whitefield died in Newburyport, Mass. Of noted American evangelists the names of Charles Grandison Finney and Dwight Lyman Moody are preeminent. The former was an ordained minister who ended his career as Professor of Theology, and, finally, as President, of Oberlin College. Moody was a layman to the last. For the ministry of both, American Christians still thank God.

All four were itinerant evangelists, moving from place to place; from land to land. But Charles Haddon Spurgeon differed from all four, in that he was an evangelist fixed in place; from the beginning, centering his labors in the pulpit of a local church; known exclusively as a pastor; uniting, in a degree not less than unique, evangelistic, pastoral, productive, and administrative ability, each of the first order.

The distinguishing feature of his long ministry was

the evangelistic purpose that unified and gave quality to all his efforts. In the pulpit his first aim was to draw souls to Christ and his service. His pastoral preaching, and influence with individuals, were largely directed to securing each member of his church as a colaborer with himself in the attempt to seek and save others. Wesley's slogan was his motto, "All at it, always at it."

When he started the Pastor's College a like purpose determined him. To multiply the number of soul-winning pastors was the declared object. To that end its training was chiefly directed. Archibald G. Brown, perhaps the most useful graduate of the school, and later pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, at the celebration of Spurgeon's fiftieth birthday, declared:

> Mr. Spurgeon has given all in the College a passion for souls. Above all things we desire that God will make us the means of winning many to the Saviour.

The Stockwell orphanages for boys and girls, and even the almshouses, were centers of evangelistic activity among young and old alike. The cluster of mission schools, more than thirty in number, supported by the Metropolitan Tabernacle, in various parts of London, manned by members of the church, were each imbued by the evangelistic spirit. Maker of many books, Spurgeon's main product as an author was the revised sermons, published one a week, for more than thirty years. Twenty-five hundred of them were issued, with an average circulation per sermon of

twenty-five thousand. Mr. Fullerton, who has first-hand knowledge, is authority for the statement that more than a hundred millions have gone into all parts of the world, in various languages. As revised from the stenographer's notes, to which Spurgeon gave one day of his week, they remained the same direct appeals to the souls of men to accept and serve Christ as Saviour and Lord; differing in this respect, to an utmost degree, from all other published sermons. The result has been the conversion of many *readers,* in lands as far apart as Africa and Australia. David Livingstone carried one of these sermons with him throughout his African journeys. It was found among his effects when he died. It finally reached its author's hands with the words written in the corner, "Very good. D. L." Alongside it in Spurgeon's library lay a copy of the same sermon in the French edition of it. A special edition of the sermons in German was printed by the Leipsic Book Fair, in 1861. His sermons are known to have been translated into 19 different languages.

He took all sorts of unusual texts for his discourses; e. g., "Is it not wheat-harvest today?" from First Samuel; "There go the ships," from Psalm 104; "Supposing him to be the gardener," from John's Gospel; "Prove me now," from Malachi; "His beauty shall be as the olive tree," from Hosea; "Compel them to come in," from Luke's Gospel; "What have I done?" from Jeremiah; "And they went in unto Noah into the ark," from Genesis; on leap-year day, Feb-

ruary 29, 1880, which fell on a Sunday, his text was "One born out of due time," from First Corinthians. But whatever the text, chosen from the Old Testament or the New, the sermon rings with the evangelistic note. Somewhere in the sermon there is the direct appeal. He is always "preaching for a verdict." I have gone carefully through one of his volumes. It contains twenty-seven sermons. Some are from first to last evangelistic—practically the whole an appeal to the unconverted. But some are designed to instruct and comfort believers in Christ. Others are doctrinal. One is distinctly ethical—what some of Spurgeon's hyper-Calvinistic critics sneered at as "duty-sermons." But whatever the text and theme of the discourse not one of the twenty-seven is without a direct reference to the unconverted; scarcely one without some specific reference to particular sins. The personal appeal sometimes mingles itself with the body of the sermon; in other instances it comes as a final, tender, wooing entreaty; in still others the sermon closes with the note of solemn warning against delaying decision, or against the danger of refusing Christ. Let me offer examples: The first is taken from a sermon entitled "The Warning Neglected." The appeal comes just before the announcement of the sermon's divisions: "Now this morning by God's help—" (Note that "this morning." It has come to pass that most ministers seem to think that only at a night service and under artificial light can sinners be converted. Spurgeon believed with Sylvester Horne that "there seems

to be no adequate reason why people should take their minds to church in the forenoon and their souls in the evening.")

Now this morning [the appeal I am quoting continues] by God's help, I shall labor to be personal, and whilst I pray for the rich assistance of the Divine Spirit, I will also ask one thing of each person here present—I would ask of every Christian that he would lift up a prayer to God, that the service may be blessed; and I ask of every other person that he will please to understand that I am preaching *to him* and *at him;* and if there be anything that is personal and pertinent to his own case, I beseech him, as for life and death, to let it have its full weight with him and not begin to think of his neighbor, to whom perhaps it may be more pertinent, but whose business certainly does not concern him.

Another example of direct appeal is taken from a sermon entitled "The Loved Ones Chastened," addressed chiefly to Christians. But at the close came these words:

May God the Holy Spirit, enable you to repent of your sins and to believe on Jesus; and then you shall have a portion among them that are sanctified; but unrepentant and unbelieving, if ye die so, ye must be driven from his presence, never to have life and joy and liberty, as long as eternity shall last. The Lord prevent this for Jesus' sake.

Dr. H. L. Wayland remembered to have heard him conclude a sermon in this wise:

Will you accept Christ? "Well, I will think about it." That is not the question. Will you accept Christ? "I will go home and pray." No, that is not the question. Will you accept Christ? "I will leave off swearing." No, that is not the question; *Will you accept Christ?*

Not many of Spurgeon's sermons were directly polemical in set purpose. But one such stands out from the rest, like a peak above the plain. It is the famous sermon on "Baptismal Regeneration." It is a keen, caustic, courageous, wholly devastating attack upon the baptismal service in the Book of Common Prayer. It made a tremendous stir and called forth angry remonstrances, and bitter attacks upon the preacher. Nearly three hundred thousand copies of it were sold. Something like one hundred and fifty pamphlets and sermons were evoked in retort. All England joined in the fray. You will not find anywhere a more explicit and luminous statement of the relation of New Testament baptism to faith and salvation than this sermon offers. But I refer to it now, to call attention to the fact that even in preaching such a sermon, Spurgeon could not, would not, omit the evangelistic appeal. Listen to this extract from the body of the sermon:

> This is faith; receiving the truth of Christ; first knowing it to be true, and then acting upon that belief. . . Now that such faith as this should save the soul, is, I believe, reasonable; yea more, it is certain, for we have seen men saved by it in this very house of prayer. . . My hearers, if you would be saved you must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Let me urge you with all my heart to look nowhere but to Christ crucified for your salvation. . . I would plead with you, lay hold on Jesus Christ! This is *the* foundation. Build on it! This is *the* rock of refuge, fly to it. . . I pray you fly to it now. Life is short; time speeds with eagle's wings. . . God give us this vital essential faith, without which there is no salvation. So Christ declares; so it must be.

In the midyear of 1891, Spurgeon stood in the Metropolitan Tabernacle pulpit for the last time. He had been minister of the church for 38 years. What were the last words he spoke there, before the lingering, fatal illness seized him, which ended his ministry in January, 1892? Characteristically they were a tender, direct, personal plea for surrender to Jesus Christ:

> If you wear the livery of Christ you will find him so meek and lowly of heart that you will find rest to your souls. There never was his like among the choicest of princes. He is always to be found in the thickest of the battle. When the wind blows cold he always takes the bleak side of the hill. The heaviest end of the cross ever lies on his shoulders. . . His service is life, peace, joy. Oh that you would enter upon it at once! God help you to enlist under the banner of Jesus Christ.

One traces in this last plea a certain mellowness of tone, a notable shift of emphasis, the allurement of a slightly different motive for coming to Christ, and an increase of beauty and music in the style of the appeal. He grew to the end of life. He did not alter his standing-ground, nor forsake the central doctrines of grace which had always been the staple of his preaching; but as fruit beautifies itself in ripening, so there is a winsome grace and charm about his last ministrations that could not have been expected when the fervors of youth were in him. But this change was neither radical nor alterative. He ended as he began—the most successful winner of souls of his generation; in Doctor Brastow's phrase, " The most impressive and permanently successful evangelistic preacher of his

age." In all the years of his ministry he never changed his aim, nor relaxed his efforts for the salvation of men. Could he have known, as probably he did not, that these were the last words he would speak to his vast audience he would not have spoken in any other strain—more solemnly, perhaps, but not differently.

There is in one of his sermons, years before the event, an imaginative anticipation of his funeral:

> In a little while [he said] there will be a concourse of people in the streets. Methinks I hear some one inquiring, "What are all these people waiting for?" "Do you not know? He is to be buried today." "And who is that?" "It is Spurgeon." "What! the man that preached at the Tabernacle?" "Yes; he is to be buried today." That will happen very soon. And when you see my coffin carried to the silent grave, I should like every one of you, whether converted or not, to be constrained to say: "He did earnestly urge us, in plain and simple language, not to put off the consideration of eternal things; he did entreat us to look to Christ. Now he is gone, our blood is not at his door if we perish."

What of the results of such preaching as this? When, in his eighteenth year, he accepted the pastorate of the little church in the village of Waterbeach in Essex, there were forty members. He was there less than three years. When he left, the church had trebled in membership. He himself wrote of the change wrought in the village, hitherto noted for its drunkenness and profanity:

> In a short time the little thatched chapel was crammed, the biggest vagabonds of the place were weeping floods of tears, and those who had been the curse of the parish became its blessing. I can say with joy and happiness that almost from one

end of the village to the other, at the hour of eventide, one might have heard the voice of song coming from every roof-tree, and echoing from almost every heart.

When in April, 1854, he accepted the call of the New Park Street Church, in London, he was still two months short of being twenty years of age. He hesitated long, and only after a trial ministry of some months decided favorably. The church, which had a long and honorable history, was then at the lowest possible ebb. Only eighty persons heard his first sermon in the morning; but at night, such was the instant favor he won, two or three hundred were in attendance. The chapel was soon crowded to excess and had to be enlarged. Later so great was the crush to hear the "Essex bumpkin," as some one scoffingly called him, that Exeter Hall, and then the Surrey Music Hall, were used by the church, to hold the thousands who tried to hear him. Finally the new Metropolitan Tabernacle was built with a seating capacity approximating six thousand persons. It was always full when he preached, and multitudes often went away unable to get in. He became the wonder of the day. He was ridiculed, his message was derided, all sorts of cruel misrepresentations of his words and actions were published, with caricatures, some clever, some coarse, abundant. But he was *heard* and cared not. His message told. His invitations to accept Christ were heeded. At the close of 1854 the church numbered 313; the following year, 595; the next year, 860; in 1857, 1,046. In 1875, it num-

bered 4,813. If no members had been lost in the meantime, by death and removal, it would have numbered 8,000. In 1886, the deacons found, on examining the church records, that the number received as converts, not including those by letter, was 10,809. By the year 1891 this number had been increased to 14,460, and the membership then stood at 5,311. In 1872, 571 were added in the single year; in 1874, 509; in 1875, 510. As many as 100, and once 150, were received at a single communion service. Meantime the church had flourished in all aspects of its ever-multiplying ministries. All its buildings—the Tabernacle, the Pastors' College, the Orphanages, and the Almshouses, had been dedicated free from indebtedness.

Continuously, also, the ministry of the Tabernacle pastor went on to broaden and strengthen. "This one thing I do" put no barrier in the way of other activities. He was not narrowed, either as man, student, or preacher by his predominant purpose to evangelize. He administered the funds of all the Tabernacle enterprises, with such ability as gave men confidence to entrust to him, for use in his work, large sums of money. They knew it would be honestly and efficiently spent. In all such relations his generosity kept pace with that of his supporters. They gave him six thousand pounds at one anniversary, nearly five thousand at another. He turned it all back into the work, keeping nothing of either gift for himself. He fed and cheered his flock with nutriment both palatable and

digestible. He lectured to his students, with racy humor and common sense that was both saving and sound. He edited *The Sword and Trowel,* a magazine of pith, point, and edification. He wrote and published books, and reviewed books written by others. He originated, collected, and printed proverbs; posing as "John Ploughman," under which nom-de-plume he rivaled, if he did not excel, Ben Franklin's "Poor Richard." He composed hymns, several of them to be found in our hymn-books. He preached on great occasions, outside his own pulpit, sermons that never fell below the occasion, nor failed to enrich the crowds that heard him. But in all the diversity and variety of his ministry "his one peculiar quality drew all his powers to run one way." In everything he was an evangelist; everywhere a pleader for Christ, a winner of men.

II

Of course I am aware that he was a genius—a religious and homiletical phenomenon; a man who in spite of constant bodily weakness and pain could "toil terribly," yet with ease and joy in the toiling. But do these considerations put him outside the sphere of ministerial example? Not in his measure, nor with his fertility of mind, possibly not up to his standard of fidelity to every task, can less gifted men like ourselves hope to achieve. But this one thing he surely can teach us (and it is a lesson we sorely need to learn) that, in the complexity of our pastoral calling,

one increasing purpose of evangelism can give quality to every variety of service, bring into a supreme unity of aim all our efforts, and crown our ministry with the starry blessedness of winners of souls and converters of men from sin to righteousness.

Is it less than a shame that so many of Christ's ministers feed so seldom on the "meat" He ate so gladly at the Well of Sychar, that they are so blind to the fields "white to harvest," to which He pointed his disciples, there? What a reproach that we are so seldom, and so slightly, moved with the "compassion" that mastered him, as he looked upon the multitudes that were as sheep having no shepherd! Why overlook such attitudes, acts, and words of his ministry, to attend exclusively to his injunctions to Peter to feed the lambs and sheep and to shepherd the flock? The terrible fact is that you can go into hundreds of churches, every Lord's Day, from January to December, and never once hear the minister pleading, as Spurgeon regularly did, with sinners to accept Christ and his salvation. Sporadically some churches have "spells" of evangelistic fervor, when they import an evangelist from without, to stir the church from lethargy, to bring the indifferent to interest and the hesitating to decision. Doubtless such special efforts are useful, and some ministers have a special call of God to serve as evangelists. But the danger is that, like all fevers, such zeal soon subsides, to be followed by a lassitude and neglect that leave the church more debilitated than before. By contrast, a continuous

evangelistic aim, animating both pastor and people, holding the weekly worship, and the every-day life of the church, steadily, to that polar obligation of their commission to "make disciples" of those not such, as yet, and only then to "teach" them "all things" of Christian obedience, will bring enduring spiritual health and outward prosperity to both minister and church as nothing else can. In such an atmosphere of gospel activity, every other energy of the church is vitalized, money flows with spontaneity and gratitude into the Lord's treasury; the spirit of the primitive disciples permeates all, as "with gladness and undivided heart" they are "praising God"—"looked on with favor by all the people."

I am not unmindful that the prejudice against such a continuous spirit of evangelism in the local church is wide-spread and all but unyielding. It has many causes. A shallow experience of Christ's saving grace in the minister and in the members of the church, is one cause. A want of knowing the joy there is in bringing others to Christ, is another. Win one, and you cannot stop. Win none, and you wonder how it is possible to relish personal endeavor for others' salvation. Preach the evangel for decisions, and you fall in love with the work. Preach exclusively to edify the saints, and your skill and power as an evangelist will steadily dwindle, until you lose altogether taste and aptitude for such a ministry. In this as in much else, "the fear of man bringeth a snare." Men and women are far more approachable for the gospel

appeal than is timidly supposed. Not a few are waiting for it; some of them bitterly thinking, "No man careth for my soul." But there is another fear, grounded on what seems, on the surface, a reasoned wisdom. It is the fear of bemeaning the gospel by making it commonplace and too familiar. Joined with this is the fear of hardening the hearers' hearts by appeals too constantly made and refused. A reactionary fear, recoiling from "frothy emotionalism," leads to a cold and passionless presentation of truth, which has in it no human touch and in consequence no power over the hearts of men. I had myself an experience along these lines which (in the intimacy of these lectures) I may be pardoned for mentioning. While a student here, in my last year, I was the stated supply and expected pastor of a church in Philadelphia. A condition of spiritual warmth in the church seemed to call for special services. Accordingly I gave the days of several weeks to my studies and classes here, my nights to preaching the gospel, there. Before I graduated and settled, I had baptized just short of a hundred persons, as the fruits of these services. In one of the weeks, while this was on, it came my turn to preach before Doctor Weston and the class in Homiletics. I had no time to prepare specially for that duty. Rather than fail to keep the assignment I took one of the evangelistic sermons I had preached in Philadelphia and read it before the class. You do not wonder that my surprised classmates laid aside their note-books and stared stolidly, while I addressed

them as if they were unrepentant sinners. When the usual criticisms were called for, only one would say anything. He was rather severe on the sermon as unsuited to the occasion. When he had finished Doctor Weston looked at me quizzically, and, in his gentle but pungent way, said, "If he preaches many sermons like that he will soon have his hearers like a singed cat—nothing left to get hold of."

Whatever the causes of the existing prejudice against ardent and continuous evangelism in the local church, it is our duty to take some risks concerning them. I believe, with all my heart, what Sylvester Horne said, at Yale, within a few days of his unexpected and lamented death:

> It is time all Christian preachers equipped themselves more definitely for evangelistic work. The ministry that is not evangelistic is not in the full sense a Christian ministry, for we cannot obey our Lord's command and leave his divine appeal unuttered to those who are heedless and unresponsive. . . It is a work that demands the best brains we possess; and no training can be too thorough, and no reading too wide for the minister whose aim is to be to bring the irreligious and the indifferent on to the side of Christ and the kingdom. We can never forget that it was Paul, the most accomplished and erudite of the apostles, whose soul was fired most with a passion for evangelism, before which the old racial barriers went down like a bowing wall and a tottering fence.

In view of all this, how timely, wise, and heartening was the decision of our Northern Baptist Convention to make the current year one of determined evangelism in all the churches of its territory.[1] If only it would

[1] 1926-1927.

stay thus concentrated upon the effort to evangelize the world, and let polemical theology and ecclesiastical disputes alone, how happy some of us would be.

III

Turn, finally, to think of some of the elements of Spurgeon's example as a supremely evangelistic pastor. He owed little as a preacher to personal presence or physical charm. He was under middle height, overstout, rugged rather than fine of features. He was, by heredity, the victim of rheumatic gout, which before the middle of his course kept him in pain and distress, eventually causing his death at the age of 58. He often came limping to the pulpit, leaning on a cane. His grandfather, Reverend James Spurgeon, pastor for fifty years of the Independent Church at Stambourne, Essex, to whom the grandson owed much of his interest in the Puritan theology and most of his early religious trends, said humorously to him, "Charles, I have nothing to leave you but rheumatic gout, but I have left you a great deal of that." Two features of Spurgeon's physical equipment were unusual. He had an observing and melting eye, the organ of a keen intellectual curiosity and of a tender, sympathetic heart. It glowed when he smiled and twinkled merrily when his humor prompted. Besides, he had a wonderful voice of remarkable tonal and carrying quality. All extolled it as one of his chief attractions as a speaker. Without effort or vocal strain he could make thousands hear him, even in the open

air. When he spoke out of doors to the costermongers of London one of them exclaimed: "Vot a voice, vot a Voice! Vot a coster he would make!" When speaking in the Tabernacle he was heard to the remotest corners, while seeming only to be in personal converse with the great audience. This perfectly natural manner made it easy to listen. To him the thousands of his hearers were as one man. He talked to them, to use his own phrase again, "in plain simple language." He once said: "I hate oratory; fine language seems to me wicked when souls are perishing." On another occasion, "Death to fine preaching, there is no good in it." Professor Wilkinson's discrimination is just, "Spurgeon was not the preacher of great sermons, but a great preacher." Back of his preaching lay a definite experience of genuine conversion. In early days the iron of conviction of sin had pierced his soul. For months he mourned and had no peace. He found Christ's love and God's grace one wintry day, in a little Primitive Methodist Chapel, where he had gone for convenience, when a humble, uneducated "local preacher" was speaking from the text, "Look unto me, and be ye saved." Pointing to Spurgeon he said, "Young man, you are miserable; look, look, only look and be saved." It was enough; the Holy Spirit was there to do his enlightening and renewing work. From that day to his death, the love of Christ and this simple gospel sufficed him. A Bible, open at this Scripture, lay upon his coffin. His own conversion determined his preaching.

Throughout he was a man of prayer. When "awe in God's presence" was mentioned in his hearing, he said, "I do not know the feeling, I am perfectly at home with my heavenly Father." So all felt when they were led by him in prayer. Reverent but familiar, he brought men face to face with God. His brother and associate in the ministry at the Tabernacle, James Spurgeon, said, "The secret of my brother's success, so far as I have solved it, is prayer." Wm. T. Stead bore the same witness:

> So far from regarding Mr. Spurgeon primarily as a great preacher, it will be more helpful for those who seek to find the secret of his success in his power of prayer. It was more praying than preaching that made Mr. Spurgeon, Mr. Spurgeon.

He was continually asking others to pray for him and his work. "Remember me when you have the King's ear," is a characteristic sentence from one of his letters. The Tabernacle Church was, with one accord, praying for him continually. It may be wondered whether the decay of evangelism and of converting power in the modern church is not due, largely, to the decline, all but the death, of the prayer-meeting as a gospel institution. A fireless boiler never yet got up steam. Of a prayerless church it will never be said, "This and that man was born there."

There was nothing pietistic, nor long-faced, about this supernaturalism of the Tabernacle and its pastor. It was the perfection of Christian naturalism. James Spurgeon said of Charles, "A good deal of my brother's success is due to his geniality." George Eliot, you

may remember, in *The Mill on the Floss,* makes Mrs. Poyser say of a certain Mr. Rider: "He is like a dose of physic; he griped you and he worrited you, but after all he left you much the same"; while of Mr. Irvine she said, "He was like a good meal of victual, you were the better for him without thinking of it." That was Charles Spurgeon always; in the pulpit and out of it. He was the soul of good cheer. In spite of his stern theology men found him winsome. If there were no time limit to this lecture I could keep you laughing for half-an-hour with specimens of his wit and humor. Some objected to it, strongly, when it flashed, now and then, in his sermons; but wiser men found it a saving grace.

Do not overlook the two facts which illumine Spurgeon's methods as a winner of souls: He depended much on the cooperation of others. There is pathos as well as pleading in the letter he sent to the church from Mentone when death stood at his door:

> From all I hear there is a hopeful interest excited in the ministry which the Lord has provided for you. The fish are round the boat. Now may the Lord enable the fishermen to cast the net skilfully. At times the greatest demand of the angler is for a *landing-net.* He has hold of the fish, but needs help in drawing him to shore. May every member of the church be such a landing-net to the honored preachers whom they hear. Some of you know the sacred art by long practise, let others commence the blessed habit.

The other fact is his own unwillingness to let the soul-winning end with preaching. Throughout his ministry he insisted upon dealing with inquirers individ-

ually, face to face. Here is the record of one of his days:

> Leaving home early in the morning, I went to the Chapel, and sat there all day long, seeing those who had been brought to Christ by the preaching of the Word. Their stories were so interesting to me that the hours flew by without my noticing how fast they were going. I may have seen some thirty or more persons during the day, one after the other, and I was so delighted with the tales of mercy they had to tell me . . . that I did not know anything about how the time passed. At seven o'clock we had our prayer-meeting. I went in and prayed with the brethren. . . I began to think at what hour I had my dinner, and I then remembered I had not had any. I never thought of it. I never even felt hungry because God had made me so glad.

How like the Master's word, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of!"

In dealing with Spurgeon's message as an evangelist much has been said against his Calvinism. Mr. Beecher, you know, said he succeeded in spite of it, comparing it to the camel's hump—neither necessary nor useful. But Spurgeon soon had him on the hip, by showing that the hump was vital to the camel's service as the carrier, in the desert. The Calvinism of his Puritan forebears fitted his mind like a key its lock. It opened to him the Scriptures. In their authority he had absolute confidence. He knew the Bible from end to end in all its details. He knew it devotionally, homiletically, obediently. He knew most of what Commentaries said about it. All his preaching had the note of conviction and of the earnestness born of conviction. Yet it seems to me objections to his theology have been stressed over much. I find

evidences of a certain aura of tenderness, gentle, gracious, hopeful, trusting, playing, with the shimmer of light, or the fragrance of love, about some of his sternest beliefs. He believed in eternal punishment and did not hesitate to proclaim God's wrath. Yet he ventured to say:

> While I believe in eternal punishment, and must do, or throw away my Bible, I also believe that God will give to the lost every consideration, consistent with his love. There is nothing vindictive in him, nor can there be in his punishment of the ungodly.

He believed in election; but he dared to pray in his prayer-meeting, once, "Lord, hasten to bring in all thine elect—and then elect some more." He believed and preached strenuously the substitutionary theory of the death of Christ, but in a sermon preached in 1886, on "The Three Hours' Darkness," he said:

> This darkness tells us that the Passion is a great mystery into which we cannot pry. I try to explain it as a substitution, and I feel where the language of Scripture is explicit, I may and must be explicit too. But yet I feel that the idea of substitution does not cover the whole of the matter, and that no human conception can completely grasp the whole of the dread mystery.

He was asked by a fellow pastor in London to put his faith in the simplest statement. His reply was "I can put it in four words—Jesus died for me." To me it appears that his enthusiastic love for Christ, his yearning for the welfare of souls, his passionate desire for their escape from sin and its consequences, his intense confidence that he was called of God to this ministry, and his constant dependence upon the Holy Spirit in

both study and pulpit, had quite as much to do with his success as an evangelist as his personal brand of Calvinism. In evangelism, the profound affinities of the Divine and human spirit, with the interplay between them, are more than all our theological formulas. Not logic but love is the mother of the faith that saves. No man living can enumerate exhaustively the motives that will sway men, the one this, the other that, to give a genuine response to the invitation of the evangelist. Go, then, without misgiving, to the privilege and the opportunity of winning souls for Christ.

VIII

PHILLIPS BROOKS

(1836–1893)

PREACHING AND PERSONALITY

PHILLIPS BROOKS

I

In Copley Square, Boston, stands Trinity Church, one of the chief glories of the city. Architecturally it is one of the grandeurs of America. Its stately brown stone mass is crowned by the four-square majesty of the central tower, rising toward heaven, not as Gothic pinnacles soar, light and airy, but in the solid strength and ponderous beauty of the Romanesque style. Entering through its Western portals, the auditorium, with its spacious semicircular apse, its great rounded arches, its four fluted pillars, defining, within, the centrality of the open tower, up which one looks to heights beyond the vaulting of the roof, perpetuates the impression of massive strength made by the exterior. Only the subdued light falling upon all, from the open tower, relieves the sense of heaviness, softening the majesty to a rich simplicity, revealing the beauty of glass and color, of frescoed angels, prophets, and apostles, looking down from the walls upon the worshipers below. It is the Psalmist's word materialized, "Strength and Beauty are in thy sanctuary." The edifice, without and within, is as much a monument to Phillips Brooks as to its architect, Richardson, and its decorator, La Farge. "With Brooks originated the motives that dominated the edifice; his ideas are written in the structure; to him in large measure is due its beauty and its glory." Trinity Church is Phillips

Brooks in symbol. He was as man what it is as a sanctuary of the faith. In height, six feet four inches, in bulk proportionate, rounded contour of face and form bringing even such size into symmetry, we may think and speak of him as a Romanesque man, glorified within by a luminous mind and a beautiful soul.

Scarcely could one find a greater contrast between structures than that of this stately pile and the Metropolitan Tabernacle, London, with its plain oval auditorium, its sweeping galleries, its lack of ornament, its bare simplicity. It, too, is a symbol of the man who planned, secured, and used it. It represents Charles Spurgeon; his aims, his characteristics, his ministry. The two men are dissimilar in the extreme. Brooks was a man with generations of New England's kind of aristocracy behind him—a blue-blood of Boston. He was educated at the Boston Latin School, at Harvard University, and in theology at Alexandria, Va. He was reared and ordained in a ritualistic church. He ministered both in Philadelphia and Boston to people intellectual, cultured, refined. It was among such he found his intimacies both here and in England. He was himself one of the intellectuals—a thinker, a theologian of the Broad-Church School, a poet, an artist in words. But, by virtue of "a heart within blood-tinctured of a veined humanity," irradiated by an indwelling Christ, nourishing itself upon the New Testament, he gave himself in a devotion to God and man that swept beyond all class distinctions, broke the barriers of caste and clan, surrounded the educated and

the ignorant, the student and the shopman, the lowly, the sorrowing, the doubting, the aspiring, with a yearning love, expressed in pleading messages, that drew to him, and to Christ through him, a multitude of souls. His unexpected death on January 23, 1893, at 57 years of age, was felt all over the world as a bereavement unspeakable.

Charles Spurgeon was in nearly all respects a contrast to Phillips Brooks. Though of Puritan stock he was more rustic than aristocrat in his origins. His educational preparation for the ministry was limited. He never became what could be called a scholar, though he made of himself an educated man. He worked among the lower, middle, and the poorer classes of England. He was distinctly an Englishman of the English, in tastes and associations. He was not so much a thinker as a purveyor of other men's thoughts; a proclaimer of the plain truths of the Scriptures, in their objective forms, using largely the Biblical phraseology, without philosophical analysis or metaphysical speculation. He was a man of the people, who lived for the people, but in a narrower way, that lacked the breadth of the humanism of Brooks. Yet Spurgeon's humanitarian spirit of compassion and service was hardly equalled by any of his contemporaries. A man of many gifts, he made the most of them by untiring industry, faithful study, and constant prayer. A Calvinistic Evangelical in theological views, he had a more restricted sense of conversion, and a more limited outlook upon life as Christian, than

the great Bostonian. Brooks put the case once in these words: "The thought of rescue has monopolized our religion and often has crowded out the thought of culture." But with these striking differences there were some strong resemblances between the two men. Let Dr. Ezekiel G. Robinson indicate them:

> Unlike in personal culture, doctrinal views, in taste and in manner of delivery, they are singularly alike in quoting no authorities to give weight to their sentiments; in abstaining from all allusion to their reading; in the evident absence of self-consciousness while preaching; in the possession of power to bring themselves into personal relationship with each hearer, as bearing to him an individual message, and above all in a sublime, unaffected, but unmistakable loyalty to Christ.

To these resemblances I would add another, viz., the sense they had, in common, of the worth of the souls of men as the objective of the preacher's endeavor. Spurgeon stressed more the perils of the soul, Brooks its possibilities, but it would not be just to say that one exceeded the other in the passionate desire to save and help men. If I were summoned to justify such a judgment with reference to Phillips Brooks (all admit the truth of it in Spurgeon's case) I should do so by quoting the words with which he closed his *Yale Lectures on Preaching:*

> It is by working for the soul that we best learn what the soul is worth. If ever in your ministry the souls of those committed to your care grow dull before you, and you doubt whether they have any such value that you should give your life for them, go out and work for them; and as you work their value will grow clear to you. Go and try to save a soul, and you will see how well

it is worth saving, how capable it is of the most complete salvation. Not by pondering upon it, not by talking of it, but by serving it will you learn its preciousness. So the father learns the value of his child, and the teacher of his scholar, and the patriot of his native land. And so the Christian, living and dying for his brethren's souls, learns the value of those souls for which Christ lived and died. . . All other interest and satisfaction of the ministry completes itself in this, that year by year the minister sees more deeply how well worthy of infinitely more than he can do for it is the human soul for which he works. . . May the souls of men be always more precious to you as you come always nearer to Christ and see them more perfectly as he does.

I have put this contrast and resemblance at the forefront that we may clearly see how Personality in preaching is but another name for Individuality. One ministering star differs from another; but each is a star. Each must shine in its own orbit and measure, and with a radiance of its own, whether the flaming red of Antares, or the blue-white of Sirius. A sun is central to both. That source and center for every Christian minister is Christ, and the Truth, the Way, the Life he is.

II

Few who have undertaken to tell what real preaching is, have so associated it with personality as Brooks did in his Yale Lectures. I must again use his own epochal, definitive words:

Preaching is the communication of truth by man to men. It has two essential elements, truth and personality. . . Preaching is the bringing of truth through personality. . . Jesus chose this method of extending the knowledge of himself through the

world. However the gospel may be capable of statement in dogmatic form, its truest statement is not in dogma but in a personal life. Christianity is Christ. A truth which is of such peculiar character that a person can stand forth and say of it, "I am the Truth," must always be best conveyed through personality. "As my Father hath sent me into the world, even so have I sent you into the world." It was the continuation out to the minutest ramifications of the new system of influence; of that personal method which the incarnation itself had solved. Nothing can ever take the place of preaching because of the personal element that is in it.

When he went the second time to Yale to lecture to divinity students on "The Teaching of Religion," he recurs to this same idea, again and again. He declares that in his own experience "the largest idea which covers every demand of the ministry consists in bringing the personal Christ to the personal human nature." The same insistence that personality explains both Christ and his influence, is to be found in the Bohlen Lectures delivered by Brooks in Philadelphia. His sermons exemplify rather than teach it directly. The subject we consider, then, was one he had made peculiarly his own. He so developed, clarified, and stressed the idea that it has had a prominence, in all thinking and speaking about the minister and his work, it never got before his day.

There are two factors in this analysis of gospel preaching. The first is the incarnation of God in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself. The second is the incarnation of Christ in the preacher in order to the prolongation of Christ's ministry of reconciliation. The preacher must embody his message, not

merely utter it. It has become life in him, before it is a word of witness on his lips. He is no mere conduit through which the water of life flows, the pipe insensate to the stream gliding over its surface, without affecting its constituent elements. In Christ's own figure, the water of life is in him a living well, out of which it flows to refresh and vivify the souls who hear him. A minister is sometimes spoken of as a "live wire." The figure is inept. The wire is dead. It is the current that is alive. The real preacher is a battery charged from Christ. His message is a vital stream, of which Christ's very life in him, is the source. Whatever the mystery of it, inexplicable to sense, beyond the testings of reason, there must be an incarnation of the gospel Logos in the Apostle of the truth. Out of his own experience of the reality of an indwelling, living Saviour, he speaks to men. He is not a mouth, merely, with a mind behind it, which has framed with care the message he is delivering, he is "a man in Christ Jesus." It has pleased God (as in Paul's case) to "reveal his Son *in*" him, so that he can truly say, "to me to live is Christ." It is the answer to the Lord's own prayer, "I in them and thou in me . . . that the world may recognize that thou didst send me."

All of which was more than theory with Phillips Brooks. He exemplified it in all his ministering life. His hearers felt "something unique and mystical" in this man. When he spoke there was an unveiling of the world invisible. His message derived its potency

from the recognized Christliness of the messenger. Things unseen and eternal became vital realities to his hearers. There was in him, said Dr. R. S. Storrs, the same "majesty and strength of spirit, as of person." None who heard him could doubt his utter devotion to the highest ideals of duty and of truth, nor their authority over him. With the dignity of his self-respect mingled a gentleness that assured men he was "meek and lowly in heart." He not only seemed to incarnate the Spirit of Christ, but to "*incarnadine*" it with a self-sacrifice kindred to our Lord's "obedience unto death." Obedience was one of his great and constant words: The will to do Christ's will was the regnant purpose in his life. The real explanation for him of Christ's atoning work, lay back of Christ's sufferings, in Christ's surrendered will. Not all of this, but much of it, was evident, even to strangers, on first hearing him. Whenever he rose in the pulpit, the same story was told as at Nazareth, when Jesus preached, "The eyes of all were fixed on him. . . They all spoke well of him, and marveled at the gracious words that came from his lips." The same effect was felt by men of learning, and experience as preachers, as was made upon ordinary men. When Principal Tulloch of Aberdeen heard him, he wrote to his wife:

> I have just heard the most remarkable sermon I ever heard in my life. . . I never heard preaching like it, and you know how slow I am to praise preachers. So much thought and so much life combined; such a reach of mind, and such a depth and in-

sight of soul. I was electrified. I could have got up and shouted.

Professor A. B. Bruce of Glasgow University, heard Brooks three times, in one day, giving up two other engagements, after hearing the morning sermon. "How does he compare with your great preachers in Scotland and England?" he was asked. "It is this way," he replied;

> our great preachers take into the pulpit a bucket full, or half-full of the Word of God. . . But this man is . . . attached to the everlasting reservoir of God's truth and grace and love, and streams of life, by a heavenly gravitation, pour through him to refresh every weary soul.

James Bryce, the historian and ambassador, said of a sermon he heard at Harvard:

> He rose in his first few sentences like a strong-winged bird into a serene atmosphere of meditation, stilling and thrilling the crowd that filled the chapel like a strain of solemn music. Few have possessed in equal measure the power of touching what is best in men, and lifting them suddenly by sympathetic words to the elevation of high-strung feeling and purpose which they cannot reach of themselves.

Even those who heard him regularly, and were his intimates, never lost their sense of wonder at his preaching. Robert Treat Paine, his classmate at Harvard, an officer of Trinity Church, who had closest contact with him in the erection of the edifice, speaking of his extemporaneous sermons, on Sunday afternoons, in the new church, when he left his notes at home and spoke unfettered by manuscript, breaks out in such admiration as this:

These were the times when the glory of his preaching culminated. In words blazing with fire, or melted in exquisite tenderness, or radiant with hope, and changing quickly from one emotion to another, often with his head thrown back, and eyes on high as piercing through the veil, his great figure would rise and dilate to its utmost majesty, as he threw his arms wide open with that mighty gesture of loving invitation, and then his face would melt into that angel smile of tenderness, never seen by some of us on any other mortal face.

It is something to remember for a lifetime, to have heard him preach at one of these freer afternoon services, and to know by personal experience that the ecstasies of others were not exaggerations. The sermon was on the prayer of the blind man, "Lord, that I may receive my sight," in answer to the question of Jesus, "What wilt thou?" As he described the scene, especially the gracious, compassionate attitude of Jesus toward the misery of the man who could not see, the heart began to flutter, the eyes to moisten. As he swept on, with the rush of a torrent, to unfold his thought that the man was supremely wise in asking the best and biggest thing the Lord could give him, we began to feel the scorn he was heaping upon the poverty and littleness of so many of the prayers sent up to God, by ourselves and others. The humorous side of the situation crept in, for a moment, when he spoke of some of the things the man might have asked—a dog with a leash that he might be led about more securely; a new garment to take the place of his rags; money to relieve the day's hunger; a commendation to some friend who might give him shelter and assis-

tance. But none of these things did he ask: instead, that great, inclusive, vital boon—" my sight "; the one gift that would transform him from beggar to man, and make him free, among all, to live his own independent life. It was then the evangelical note was struck, full and clear, in a final plea to be content with nothing less than that new birth of the soul which is the opening of the eyes upon the things unseen, the opening of the heart to the love and help of God; the whole result, a life of freedom and of joy in serving others. It is more than forty years since that afternoon in Trinity Church; but I see and hear him, still, as if it were yesterday—his great and gracious personality, transfigured from within by a glow that made the sermon seem an outburst of " the marvelous light " of God.

There is a passage in one of the lectures in the second course at Yale, on " The Teaching of Religion," which gives one to think that Brooks knew well the effect his preaching invariably seemed to have on his hearers. The impression was so uniform and usual, many must have spoken to him about it. He was too absorbed to have been watching his audience with one half of his mind while the other was engaged with his sermon. The whole man was too concentrated on his message, for that. Whether imagined or reported the description is a real account of the impression he ever made:

A man comes and stands before a multitude of his fellow men and tells them a story. It is of something that happened long

ago, yet which concerns them. It is something which happened in one special time and set of circumstances, yet it is universal. As he speaks, his fellow men who listen begin to change before him. They flush and glow . . . they tremble in their seats; they almost leap to their feet; tears start into their eyes. It is a most attractive spectacle. It fires the speaker, and he goes on to make yet more intense and glowing the emotion that reacts on him. One who stands by and gazes, though he may not hear a word, is caught with the thrilling, beating atmosphere, and finds himself trembling with mysterious desires. The voice stops, but the spell is not broken. The people rise and go away exalted. They tread the pavement as if it sprang beneath their feet, and breathe the air as if it were alive with beautiful and serious thoughts.

III

As we pass on to review some of the elements entering into the effectiveness of personality, as related to preaching, we are in some danger of forgetting that unity is its essential power. "Whatever a man does greatly," said Goethe, "he does with his whole nature." Though Brooks himself was given to suggestive analysis of personality, generally adopting the familiar distinctions into intellect, feeling, and will, he protests against his own tendency.

What impresses us most [he says] in the best, the most God-like men we ever see is, I think, the inability to tell in them what of their power is intellectual and what is moral. It is the characteristic of all spiritual advancement that it asserts more and more the unity of man, makes him less and less a bundle of faculties, more a man, made in the image of God, who is *one* God, in the complete harmony and cooperation of all his life.

I am about to employ a more popular, in some respects, a more Biblical analysis of the aspects of personality.

For a septuagenarian, such as I am, the intricate details of the modern psychology are not engaging. I was trained before they became the vogue. As for Freud and the psychoanalysts of his school, they are among my antipathies. They end too often in a sexual mud-puddle. Doubtless you in your young enthusiasm will want to discover what the modern psychology can add to your effectiveness as preachers and teachers. All well! If only you will keep its details of process out of your sermons and let the people feel *in* you, only the effects! Spurgeon's illustration is applicable in this, as variously beside: "The cook when she sends up the dinner does not send also her pots and pans. Their place is the kitchen, not the table. . ." So, to my rough and ready outline: Think first of the outer man; the physical basis of preaching. Brooks had the advantage of most of us in this respect. A brother clergyman said of him, "He had but to stand up before an audience and let himself be seen, and the day was won." That stately presence, that commanding stature, that large and shapely head, that flashing eye, the evident manliness of his carriage, made an immediate and favorable impression. One can scarcely say as much about his voice. It was a good voice, not well managed. He was unwisely prejudiced against elocution as a study and an art. The pace of his speech was the despair of reporters; more rapid by far than that of any public speaker of his generation. His early pastor, and his mentor till nearly the end, Doctor Vinton, once expostulated with him

against his torrential delivery. He promised to try to slow up. When Vinton saw what a failure it made of his utterance he said, "Go your own gait, 2.40, or whatever it is." As to attire, Brooks avoided everything that had the clerical stamp about it. He preferred, when he could have his own way, to wear in the pulpit the black gown instead of the white surplice. But I read of him that "he was careful to observe great neatness in his dress, not growing careless with the years." He was too much a man, too little an ecclesiastic, to set any store by church millinery. But he was too reverent in spirit to be heedless about anything concerned with his conduct, or presentation of himself, in the worship and word of God.

When we think of the advantage Phillips Brooks had over the ordinary minister, in bodily presence, it is a comfort to remember that the second century writing, *The Acts of Paul and Thecla,* avers that the Apostle Paul was "a small man, bandy-legged, bald, with eyebrows meeting." Most of the early traditions deny that his presence was impressive. Renan, with the worst of bad manners, called him "a dirty little Jew"; but he was the mightiest man of the ministry except the Lord himself. Whitefield, they tell us, was cross-eyed, but it was easily forgotten when the fire of his soul began to blaze. John Wesley was slight of stature though he had a saintly face. Many another example might be instanced to prove that one need not be a comely giant to be an effective preacher. But let the man who is eager to show that he has a

fist and proceeds after the manner of John Knox to "ding the pulpit into blads," be sure that there is a loss of power in such pulpit athletics. Let the man who muffles his voice or drops his tone at the end of his sentences expect some one to cry out the title of a recent book by a deaf man, "Speak louder, please." Hearers wish the speaker had no voice when he screams and shouts at them until they shiver. If you will pardon an indelicacy which has warrant, however, in the English Bible, some one asked Henry Ward Beecher how he came to have such control over his voice, especially in explosive ways. His reply was, "I found out I had a belly." Few ministers who understand the relation of the diaphragm to the vocal stream ever have minister's sore throat. An old teacher of mine who often "beat me black and blue" with his tongue, for my vocal faults, used to cry at me, "Plan it right, and the planet will do it for you." Look behind some pulpits, and you will find the floor covering worn threadbare, at the spots where the minister's heels sought the alliance of the planet for his message. I often wish it were the custom in our Baptist churches to wear the Genevan gown in preaching. Like charity it can cover a multitude of sins. The man whose clothing is awry, or spotty, whose linen is soiled, whose hair is in disarray, whose gesturing hands need soap and water, showing nails rimmed in darkness, might well expect the prophet Malachi to rise again and cry, "Will Jehovah accept any of your persons?" or Michael the Archangel (see

Jude, verse nine) to exclaim, as he is said to have done once to the devil, "The Lord rebuke thee." Such faults are not trivialities. They blemish the truth-incarnating personality. They hinder the message; discredit His ambassador, and so dishonor Christ. Of a certain Scotch minister it was said, and it was a patent of nobility, "Bodily presence is his vocation; the more he is seen, the more he is felt."

Consider now the upper man. His life through, this was one of Phillips Brooks' chief concerns. From his earliest days as a student he was in search of intellectual power. He put his mind to many tasks. He read in both classical and modern languages with ease and rapidity. Ideas aroused him. He kept innumerable note-books in which, in two divisions, he recorded—in the first, thoughts of others met in reading, and in the second, thoughts of his own kindled by books, or excogitated in meditation. He had neither wife nor bairn; books were his most constant companions, and his chief friends. When he lay in his brief last illness, books covered his bed, some of them open. He fed his mind; but even more he used and stretched his mind. Dr. George A. Gordon, of the Old South Church, was of the inner circle of his friends. In his memorial sermon he said:

> The intellect of Phillips Brooks was as striking as the man himself. There was in it a Platonic subtlety, sweep, and penetration, a native capacity for the highest speculations. . . There was in his mind a Hindu swiftness, mobility, penetrativeness. . . Had he chosen he could have been one of the subtlest metaphysicians.

But he preferred to work through the imagination rather than by the process of dialectics. The three words his biographer, Doctor Allen, chose to define his intellectual powers were intensity, comprehensiveness, balance. The minister who does not cultivate his intellect is sure of short pastorates, dwindling influence, final failure. He must be a man at the top, or he is lost, in his vocation as minister. He has to learn how to bring other endeavors into subjection and correlation with this. The educated man is one who has "a despotic control of his intellectual faculties." He is master in his own mind. Will is predominant and directs at pleasure his powers. He can focus the whole of his mentality where, and as, he will. He knows what concentration means and how it is secured. He can turn attention to this, or that, and be the whole of himself at the point he is considering. Such a man may have less lumber of knowledge than some men. Memory in him may not be the exceptional faculty that it was in Macaulay; but to be a living encyclopedia is not the highest style of an educated man. Rodin's statue "The Thinker," bowed, intense, absorbed, as he bends his whole mind to the task of finding a clue for his problem, represents the type of mentality the ministry demands. What hearers wait for with longing, is not an aggregation of this and that, thoughts more or less related (oftener less than more), gathered from here and there, but a Thinker—a man who can guide them through the maze of truth, simplifying, clarifying, illuminating it,

as he unfolds its significances, its relations to practical life, its beauties and harmonies and analogies. Only a man who has trodden the winepress of the search after truth, beforehand, alone, and with sweat of brain, is justified in asking men to give him their undivided attention, twice a week, for thirty minutes. To deal with the themes of the Bible in the pulpit with clear simplicity and in words "understanded of the people," means mental toil and uttermost consecration of every intellectual power. One dear man some of us have known and loved, who could bring the fruit of patient study of the Scriptures, in their original tongues, after hard thinking as to their meaning and implications, to the minds and hearts of the common people, in plain speech, yet of charm and beauty, with a power of persuasion that made him an evangelist indeed. His name was Edward Judson. To be like him, in your measure, you will have to "let the upper lights be burning"; a sense opposite to that to which we are exhorted by the old hymn.

As to the inner man, there was much about Brooks that he kept in reserve. In his sermon on "The Secret of the Lord," he said:

> Every living thing which is really worth knowing has a secret in it, which can be known only to the few. . . The more a man is, the more secret is the secret of his life; the more conscious we are of his reserve.

But this very reserve is a sign of innate sensitiveness. If he had not been a Greatheart he never could have done the work he did. Coleridge said, "Every

man of genius possesses deep feeling . . . carries the freshness and feelings of childhood into the powers of manhood." The words fit Phillips Brooks as the glove fits the hand. He kept a child's heart within; a heart easily touched by the sorrows, the need, the affliction of others. His power of sympathy was universal. He was not only a great preacher, he was a great pastor too, in the pulpit and out of it. Many of his sermons are given up to consolation, even the earlier of them. It is written in his biography that his letters to those in affliction would make a large volume. Significant is the way he relates feeling to preaching first, and then to the pastor's work: "The man who lacks emotion lacks expression"; and then he turns it round to say, "The man who lacks emotion lacks receptiveness." It was because of his largeness of heart that men of all classes and conditions claimed him as theirs. As Doctor Day of Syracuse University put it;

> The scholar said, "He is of us"; and the unlettered, "He is of us." The poor said, "He is of us"; and the rich said, "He is of us." To the young he was full of buoyancy and brought a message of hope; to the troubled, he was a man deeply acquainted with grief.

A woman who heard him preach said the impression she carried away was "his deep, overpowering love for his congregation." When her remark was reported to Brooks he was affected to tears and replied, "I would rather that should be said of me than anything else."

In nothing is the personality of Phillips Brooks more exemplary than in this, "Keep the heart responsive," he will ever be saying to the young minister. As nothing but fire can kindle fire, so nothing but love can awaken love. If a man wants the hearts of his people he must give them his own unstintedly. An iceberg in the pulpit means a frost in the pews. There must be as many avenues to the pastoral sympathy of the preacher as there are gates to the holy city—one on every side. The more people you can love the more you can save. The more diversely your affections range the more widely your influence will extend. If there are those who show enmity toward you they must be the chief objects of your love. Any other course is a denial of our Lord. For the minister, Cicero's counsel is wisdom, "To live is to think"; but the example of Jesus is still more imperative: "To live is to love."

If I ask you also to think a little while of the Old Man and the New Man as elements in a Christian personality the psychologists will laugh. But Paul's struggle recorded in the seventh of Romans is no laughing matter. John Brooks said his brother Phillips hated that so many should be saying to him, "Oh! it is easy for you to be good." He did leave the impression of inward purity and goodness. But there are sins of refinement no less than of animalism. In his sermon on "The Sea of Glass" he draws a picture of the prosperous man who is still good and true. It is so aptly drawn that one comes to feel it is an

unconscious miniature of his own happy, holy life. But he goes on to ask:

> Was there no struggle there? Do you suppose that man has never wrestled with his own success and happiness; that he has never prayed, and emphasized his prayer with labor, "In all time of my prosperity, Good Lord, deliver me!" "Deliver me!" That is the cry of a man in danger, of a man with an antagonist. For years that man and his prosperity have been looking each other in the face and grappling one another. Supremacy was not won without a struggle than which there is no harder on earth.

"Only when men have dared to think of themselves sublimely . . . does sin become essentially and forever horrible," he says in another discourse. And still again:

> Sin is a dreadful, positive, malignant thing. . . Any other talk about it is shallow and mischievous folly. . . You can never dissect away the very principle of corruption which is in the substance of the blood itself. Nothing but a new reenforcement of health can accomplish that. . . If you can indeed grow vigorously brave and true and pure, then cowardice and falsehood and licentiousness must perish in you. . . O death to Sin, which comes by the new birth to righteousness! O destruction, which is but the utterance of fulfilment on the other side.

I have no wish to disparage any man's attainments in holiness, nor his growth in grace, but I suppose all you men, looking forward to the ministry, will admit that there is (in a phrase the chemical analysts use) at least "a trace" of the old Adam in your life. It will balefully exert itself now here, now there; in your body, in your conscience, in your judgments, in your affections. It can turn a worker into a loafer, love

into lust, candor into prejudice, affection into hate, self-control into anger, zeal for righteousness into fanatical exclusivism. I believe it to be true that the holier you become, the more intense the struggle against sin will be. Doctor Jowett told of an occasion when he and Hugh Price Hughes were walking together. Hughes suddenly stopped and clutched his companion's arm, as he said, "Jowett, every evangelical minister is always on the verge of the abyss." But there is always victory in this struggle, with Christ at our side, and dwelling within by the Holy Spirit. The New Man, which is after God's image, may be reenforced day by day, in fellowship with our Lord. We shall be able to do, bear, be, and suffer all things as Christ becomes more and more, our very life. What we ought to keep in mind is, that out of this moral and spiritual struggle, a richer and more efficient Personality emerges; our power to minister enlarges with such experience.

Let me revert in closing to the idea of the individual man, with which we set out. All the elements of a man's nature head up into the unity he is. Each one of us is perpetually saying "I." We never use that pronoun but that we separate, each, himself, from every other soul whomsoever. What a blessing to the churches, what an advantage to the Kingdom of God that Christ's ministers are not cast in one mold! Every man's personality is a gift of God. The fact is an urge to be yourself. As old Alexander Whyte said sternly to younger John Kelman, when he thought he

saw some sign of imitation of his preaching in Kelman's discourses, " Bring your own message." Imitate none of your brethren. Be neither Brooksite nor Spurgeonette. Learn from all your brethren how the better and the more perfectly to be yourself. The man Christ needs is the man you are.

IX

HENRY WARD BEECHER

(1813–1887)

PREACHING AND PUBLIC SPIRIT

HENRY WARD BEECHER

I

Not many preachers have been honored by a statue, set in a central public place, to be seen of men and women, passing on their errands, day after day. In the square of the Church of St. Sulpice, in Paris, four bronze figures, heroic in size, sit around its central fountain, commemorating four of the greatest preachers of France, Bossuet, Fléchier, Fénelon, and Massillon. One of the pleasures of a visit to Exeter, England, is the sight, in the Cathedral Close, of that white marble effigy of Richard Hooker, Master of the Temple, author of the famous work *Ecclesiastical Polity,* known generally as "the judicious Hooker." He sits in a lordly chair, as if still contemplating the men and movements of the Church's long history. In a porch of Trinity Church, Boston, stands St. Gaudens' statue of Phillips Brooks, the Christ behind him, with his hand outstretched to the great preacher's shoulder. In the hall of the Baptist Church House, in London, sits the sculptured semblance of Charles Spurgeon, an evidence that the antagonisms of the "Down Grade" controversy are forgotten. Of all such memorials, to me the most artistic and significant is Ward's peerless statue of Henry Ward Beecher, placed opposite the civic buildings in Brooklyn's busiest center. It is a perfect reproduction of the figure and features of the

man who made Brooklyn famous, the world over, by his eloquence, his patriotism, and his sufferings. The statue was provided for by public subscription, immediately following his death. It, therefore, expresses the love and admiration of fellow citizens who had known him long and well. It is the tribute of their confidence in his integrity in spite of the slanders that assailed him. It stands confronting the Court House, in which, for long weeks, he endured an assault of conspirators upon his character, that would have crushed and broken any but such conscious innocence and Christian courage as his. At the foot of the statue are placed the figures of two Negro children, whose broken shackles lie beside them. The monument thus perpetuates the remembrance of Beecher as the denouncer of slavery, the defender of the Union of the States, the citizen whose public spirit and patriotic devotion distinguished the darkest years of the nation's history.

Henry Ward Beecher was God's gift to the Church in an era of transition. He brought to the pulpit liberation from long stereotyped forms of discourse, introducing new and more forceful methods. He gave to the Biblical revelation of God as Father, and of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Friend, a fresh and fuller unveiling; to Christian ethics a more direct application to practical life. But quite as much was Mr. Beecher the special instrument of Divine Providence, sent of God for the service of the nation, and its salvation in the day of peril; to which he dedicated the gifts of

political insight and wisdom, with the persuasive powers of an arousing eloquence. In a real way the pastor of Plymouth Church, through these and other like ministries, became the representative publicist of all the churches, of every name. They were all his debtors for his championship of every common cause. The unique Memorial Service held in Plymouth Church, the Sunday following his death, was a witness, without parallel, to the catholicity of the love that bound him to all Christians; and to the comprehensiveness of the appreciation felt by all denominations for his wide-spread influence. The speakers, all of them ministers, of whom it was my high privilege to be one, represented the Unitarian, the Presbyterian, the Lutheran, the Swedenborgian, the Universalist, the Methodist, the Baptist, the Dutch Reformed, the Episcopalian, the Congregationalist Churches, and the Jewish synagogue. A letter was read from Doctor McGlynn of the Roman Catholic Church which conveyed appreciations that coming from a Romanist were the more significant:

> Foremost in the work of hastening the coming of the better day was the great man whose death we mourn and for whose work we give thanks. None other so well as he taught the men of this land and time to exalt the essentials of religion pure and undefiled, in which we all agree, and to minimize the differences that seem to separate us. To him was given to see with clearer vision, to reveal with unequalled genius, and with tireless energy to make common among men the meaning of Him, whom we all revere as our Divine Teacher, who taught of old on the Mount and by the seashore the core of all religions—the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

Fortunate were we who knew Mr. Beecher in the fraternal contacts of the Brooklyn Clerical Union, a private Clericus, of twenty-five, of all denominations, meeting fortnightly, on Saturday evenings. We treasure the memory of his uplifting converse, his flashing wit, his buoyant humor. Our gratitude will never pale for the blessing of his prayers and the kindling influence of his personality seen and felt at close range. It was in the unreserve of such hours, that the genuine simplicity and brotherliness of the man behind all his greatness, the exuberance of his life of feeling, his social alertness and vivacity were to be felt, deepening admiration into affection. Some years before his death he withdrew from every organization, external to Plymouth Church, except this Union, in fellowship with which he remained to the end. At his funeral we sat in a body before his casket, at the request of his family.

II

An English conservative newspaper said of Mr. Beecher, " He may be taken as a conspicuous illustration of the view that there is such a thing as greatness of personality, as distinguished from greatness in any particular capacity." At the time of his death, in 1887, there was published in the *Law Journal* of Albany, N. Y., an article by its editor, Mr. John D. Parsons, in which it was revealed that in the presence of Mr. Parsons and the Hon. Martin I. Townsend, of Troy, N. Y., William A. Beach, the leading coun-

sel for the prosecution in the famous trial, predisposed, of course, to believe Mr. Beecher guilty, declared that he then believed him innocent, and that his appearance and utterance when he asserted his innocence on the witness-stand were the most sublime and overpowering exhibition of the majesty of human nature that he ever beheld. He could not understand how any one could resist that solemn avowal. "I felt then and feel now," said he, "that we were a pack of hounds trying in vain to drag down a noble lion." *The Troy Times* followed this with the declaration, that to one of his friends in Lansingburgh, Beach had said, "I had not been four days in the trial before I was confident that he was innocent." Even in ordinary and passive moods there was much that was *leonine* in Beecher's appearance. His large head, open brow, broad and full, his flowing locks seldom shortened by shears, his prominent eyes and nose, firm mouth and strong jaw, his short neck set well into his shoulders, made up a face strong in repose, but of regal majesty when flushed with the excitements and courage of his attack upon a badgering and hostile audience, or when aglow with the inspirations of great ideals and noble thoughts. His eyes were blue with the blueness of the sky, but strange fires were latent there, that, when confronting or denouncing evils, sprang into blaze, as blue eyes seldom do. As preacher in the pulpit, lecturer on the platform, orator on set occasions, he used his organ-voice with wondrous skill. His elocution was perfect; the result of close study and long

practise, it had become a part of himself, as natural as his breathing. He could lift his hearers to heights that seemed perilous for them and him, but he lowered them gently to restful levels, till the surging of some new thought started him heavenward again. His explosive tones of anger and denunciation were like the bursting of a shell; his incitements to hope and courage rang like a trumpet call. He could be as conversational as if speaking to a friend alone. After reading his *Yale Lectures on Preaching* I used to run down from Albany to hear him; time and again, I sat there in the gallery, over against him, trembling with the excitement of listening, and wishing the Lord would make me some such preacher.

His rhetoric was, as his theology, all his own. He had a fondness for unusual words. His psychology was phrenology, and the fact often influenced his choice of words. His illustrations were felicitous in their illuminating power. You saw by the light they gave, and did not think of the window. His gospel was Christ. In Him he saw and felt God; interpreting the Father by the Word made flesh. His message was evangelical in content, spirit and aim, without the conventional phraseology of the ordinary evangelist. He was a firm believer in the operation of the Holy Spirit upon the human soul, and in prayer as the avenue of his approach. The prayer-meetings of Plymouth Church often opened the way to revivals, which brought many at a time into the fellowship of the church; once over three hundred. These prayer-

meetings were, in many respects, a model of free, warm-hearted, social worship. His own prayers in the public worship were often more helpful than his sermons. Mr. Halliday, his assistant for many years, who must have heard him pray oftener than any one else, said of them:

> They are marvelous in their inclusiveness and individuality. . . It would seem while he is praying that each one in the church was taken in his arms and borne into the presence of that God "who is waiting to be gracious." A conscious nearness to the Saviour is very apparent and prevalent. Many have said that after the prayer they did not seem to need the sermon. Their weary, yearning, dissatisfied spirit had obtained rest, satisfaction, and peace.

Before my day in its fellowship, Mr. Beecher once gave, by request, an address to the Clerical Union on the relation of private prayer to a minister's public conduct of the devotional worship. "Never will the members forget it," said Dr. J. O. Peck. "As he spoke of his personal experiences, and of how he cultivated and fed his spiritual life, all felt that the speaker was one who dwelt in the Holy of Holies in rich, blessed communion with God." When asked by one of the members if he prepared or studied his prayers beforehand, Mr. Beecher replied: "I never know a word I shall utter. All true prayer is an inspiration of the Holy Spirit." After I became a member of the Union, again by request, Mr. Beecher explained to us his method of preparing his sermons. The facts, by frequent reproduction, have now become familiar. He began by explaining that he always kept himself full

of sermonic material. By reading, reflection, observation of men and affairs, he had resources within, out of which sermons were sure to come. Everything he saw, heard, read, or pondered, ran toward his pulpit. His Saturdays he always spent abroad from home, walking the streets, looking into shop windows, going to some workshop or factory to talk with men, refreshing himself by examining precious stones at Tiffany's, talking with the artizans who were mounting them, or working with the precious metals; home and early to bed, as Pepys was so fond of entering in his diary. Rising Sunday morning fresh and eager, he selected his text, drew out a brief plan of discourse on one or two half sheets of note-paper, revolved the whole back and forth in his thoughts, went to church and preached, without a care as to the outcome. The notes he either gave to some hearer who wanted them, or left behind on his pulpit table. "I never look after a bullet," he said, "when it is once fired." The sermon was always stenographically reported by Mr. Ellinwood and was published as a number of the *Plymouth Pulpit* pamphlets, generally without revision by the man who had preached it. A long nap after the Sunday mid-day dinner, and the evening sermon was prepared for, in exactly the same way. No method could be less an example to other preachers. A young preacher of ordinary gifts who sets out to follow it, is sure to fail of his best growth and usefulness. It will be a wonder if he does not soon find empty pews before him. It must be remembered that Beecher was

always using his pen in other ways, and that in earlier life he prepared written sermons with extreme care. It was due, probably, to this method of preparing them I have described that his sermons were longer than is customary. He often went the hour, and sometimes exceeded it. Some of his sermons would certainly have been bettered by condensation. His people rarely complained of their length. He was seldom dull. His discourses sparkled with the life given by illustrations and were not infrequently enlivened by humor. Professor Hoppin, who long filled the chair of Homiletics at Yale, has said of this last feature:

> It is by no means sure that wholesome humor in the pulpit, when it comes naturally, when it is sudden and irresistible, and when it is subservient to more earnest objects, is always out of place. . . It was Mr. Beecher's effective way of getting a hearing, of making his speech vivid, of rousing attention, of giving truth an incisive force, darting it into the open and unguarded place.

It is something of added force to read in Dean Charles R. Brown's lectures on the *Art of Preaching,* himself a preacher of the first rank, a confirmation of his predecessor's judgment. I quote both these men of taste and refinement, because Beecher was severely criticised for his humorous injections. Doctor Brown says:

> The employment of delicate humor occasionally will rest and refresh an audience. The smile which plays across a congregation enables their minds to unbend from the strain of serious and sustained mental effort. They come back to the more vital interests (of the sermon) with strength renewed. . . Where the

truth is clothed at times in unusual forms and with a touch of humor, the meaning stands revealed the more clearly, and it will be more readily retained by the average mind.

It was not, however, his humor, but his deep, wide, tender human sympathy, that held his great audiences to him, in a willing bondage of the ear, through the forty years of his Brooklyn ministry. This human sympathy and the value he placed upon the human soul and its greatest interests, above all other characteristics gained for him his fame as a preacher and held to him the hearts of multitudes. He encouraged those in doubt. He brought hope to the despairing. Very different minds found help from his ministry. People of opposite temper and tendency were equally satisfied that he understood and spoke to them. He seemed to have "an intuitive perception of the moods of mind," and was swift to meet the call it made upon his sympathy. Dr. H. R. Haweis, the English clergyman, made a study of Beecher and reported his findings in the *Contemporary Review;* among other things he said:

No preacher ever impressed us more with the feeling of living with the life of his people. He wishes to be one with them, not underrating their difficulties. . . Although he would rather rejoice with them than suffer with them, he is content to bear their sorrows . . . and be depressed by their doubts and troubles. There is something almost Pauline in the way he seems at times to lift the burden of each one individually; to hold on to the souls of his people as one who cannot bear to let them go, whilst feeling that they must go, and are going from the great deep to the great deep.

If I were looking for a summary of Mr. Beecher's preaching in its essential quality and power, I should seize these, his own, words as that summary:

> To preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, to have Christ so melted and dissolved in you that when you preach, you preach him, as Paul did, to have every part of you living and luminous with Christ, and thus to make use of everything that is in you, your analogical reasoning, your logical reasoning, your imagination, your mirthfulness, your humor, your indignation, your wrath, to take everything that is in you, all steeped in Jesus Christ and to throw yourself with all your power upon the congregation—that has been my theory of preaching the gospel. . . I have felt that every gift he has in him, that has any relation to the persuasion and the melting of men, a man should put on the altar, kindle them all, and let them burn for Christ.

III

Mr. Beecher came to his interest in public affairs directly enough. They were always under discussion in his early home. His father, Dr. Lyman Beecher, was a publicist before him. The father's sermon on dueling, when Burr slew Hamilton, and his aggressive sermons against intemperance, won him national fame. The Puritan spirit of New England was a community spirit, aggressive for righteousness. When Henry Ward, Lyman's son, completed his college training at Amherst, the father had become a professor at the Lane Theological Seminary in Cincinnati. There Henry also betook himself to study theology. The fight between the Old and New Schools of thought in the Presbyterian Church was then hot. Lyman Beecher, with all the Beecher

fervor, was of the New School. Prof. Wilson, of the same Seminary, was of the Old. He brought a charge of heresy against Doctor Beecher. It was these and kindred doctrinal disputes that set the younger Beecher against formal theology as he had been taught it, and heard it debated in the Lane Seminary. In a comical sort of way he turned it into a man-of-straw bugaboo, that he never ceased to tilt at for the rest of his life. He was as much a theologian in his own fashion as any minister has a right to be—much more one, than many preachers have the ability to be. He left Lane Seminary to become pastor of the little church at Lawrenceburg, Indiana. Its membership was largely of women, at his going. Beecher said of it, "nineteen were women, and one was nothing." He was his own sexton, lighting the fires, ringing the bell, dusting the church, and filling the pulpit. His salary was meager, but he lived on it and did, besides his parish duties, much explorative missionary work and preaching in the surrounding country. After two years he was called to the Presbyterian Church in Indianapolis. Here began his real ministry and his first interest in public affairs. One chief feature of this eight-years pastorate was his series of Sunday evening *Lectures to Young Men.* In these he struck hard blows at gambling, drunkenness, sexual impurity, and the like open, coarse sins. They were thoroughly studied, written with care, were based on conditions general in the city, but outside the special range of his own parish. It was his first determined

manifestation of public spirit. Of the lectures, the senior Dr. Leonard Bacon, thinking of the father who had sent him the book, said:

> I remember reading that book with great pleasure, admiring its force of thought and expression, its wealth of illustration, its insight into human nature . . . its boldness of assault and denunciation, its earnestness in warning young men against moral dangers and the electric force of its incitements to manly aspiration and manly living. In every lecture I seemed to see sparks as from the red iron on the old anvil, and to hear the old Boanerges thundering with a youthful voice.

In Indianapolis, too, young Beecher got his first close contact with chattel slavery. It was a tender issue, and few dared take it into the pulpit. It is exceedingly interesting to read of the tact and discretion with which he prepared the way for his later outspoken denunciation of the traffic. Beecher himself is speaking:

> Nobody was allowed to say a word on the subject of slavery. They were all red-hot out there then; and one of my elders said, "If an Abolitionist comes here I will head a mob to put him down." I was a young preacher. I had some pluck. I felt, and it grew on me, that it was a subject that ought to be preached upon. . . The question was, How shall I do it? I recollect one of the earliest efforts I made in that direction was in a sermon on some general topic. It was necessary to illustrate a point. I did it by picturing a father ransoming his son from captivity among the Algerians and glorying in his love of liberty and his fight against bondage. They all thought I was going to apply it to slavery; but I did not. I applied it to my subject, and it passed off, and they all drew a long breath. It was not long before I had another illustration from that quarter, and so, before I had been there a year, I had gone over all the sore spots of

slavery in illustrating the subject of Christian experience and doctrine.

All of this Western experience was Beecher's apprenticeship for the great work of his life. When he was called to take charge of the newly organized Plymouth Church in 1847, at 34 years of age, it was chiefly an opportunity to which he came. Only the beginnings of what became a great church were in hand. The rest was not even in sight. But the newcomer had a valuable experience behind him, a wealth of undeveloped capacity within him, gifts that soon displayed themselves as genius; charm to win, tact to hold, and force to move men and women to a ministry as devoted in the pew as was his own in the pulpit. Within a few years Beecher was in the full swing of the Anti-Slavery movement; the most demanded man at all public meetings of the Society, fast becoming a national figure in shaping policies and directing thought to the issues which further on led to the organization of the Republican Party and the election of Abraham Lincoln to the Presidency, resulting, to Beecher's great delight, in the emancipation of the slaves, the defeat of the Secessionists, the reconstruction of the Union.

In the early part of the struggle not a little of Beecher's great influence was exerted outside his pulpit, on the platform, and through the columns of *The Independent*. Two or three great articles of his, "Shall We Compromise?" and "On Which Side Is Peace?" were read all over the North and South alike,

but not with equal favor. Calhoun detected in these articles the steel and skill of a great antagonist who knew the situation and saw the coming conflict to be unavoidable. On the platform, denouncing slavery and slave-holders with all his vigor and eloquence, Beecher was subjected to jeers, hissing, heckling, but he was never known to fail of an answer which turned the laugh on his interrupters. At one meeting he described the miseries of black women whose husbands were sold away from them, alluding to the omission, on the plantations, of the clause in the marriage service, "What God hath joined together let no man put asunder," and declaring that in moving from plantation to plantation some men came to have as many as twenty wives. From the gallery came the scornful cry: "That's nothing! Some men in New York have twenty wives." Quick as lightning came Beecher's answer: "I am sorry for them. I vote for their immediate emancipation." Another time he was telling of the treatment rebellious slaves received in the penitentiary. Some one hurled at him, "That's a lie!" "I will not debate with the gentleman the issue of the penitentiary," retorted Beecher, "he seems to know all about it, having been there himself, apparently." It was such practise as this in handling opposing hecklers, that prepared him for that magnificent display of courage, stamina, and the patient, conquering power of his oratory, when, the Civil War being in midcourse, he delivered in Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and London those five thrilling de-

fenses of his country's course and policy, which won to the side of the North the great body of the middle-class and working men of England, and made it impossible for the British Government to recognize the Confederacy and give it support. Howl as they would, hiss at their loudest, threaten as they pleased, the organized mob of the supporters of the South could not silence the calm and determined, good-humored Beecher, who, in the adaptation of each speech to the special antagonism of the locality, and in the revelation of his perfect knowledge of his country's constitutional history, together with a complete understanding of every phase of the struggle between the States, made one of the most amazing revelations of the power of human speech the world has ever seen.

In his article " The Minister Plenipotentiary " in the *Atlantic Monthly* for January, 1864, Oliver Wendell Holmes, said:

> He returns to America having finished a more remarkable embassy than any envoy who has represented us in Europe since Franklin. . . He kissed no royal hand, he talked with no courtly diplomatists, he was the guest of no titled legislator, he had no official existence. But through the heart of the people he reached nobles, ministers, courtiers, the throne itself. . . England never listened to a nobler and more thoroughly national speaker than this minister, clothed with full powers from Nature and bearing the authentic credentials from his Divine Master; to whom, on his return from his successful embassy, we renew our grateful welcome.

Both before he went away and after his return Mr. Beecher was pouring forth from the pulpit of

Plymouth Church a tide of eloquence and reason, his sermons bearing such titles as "The Battle Set in Array," "The National Flag," "The Camp: its Dangers and Duties," "Modes and Duties of Emancipation," "The Success of American Democracy," "Liberty under Laws." When the conflict was victoriously ended it was his voice that uttered the nation's gratitude at the reraising of the flag at Fort Sumter. When Lincoln was assassinated, no eloquence was more pathetic and moving than his. When the Reconstruction muddle was churning he preached in '65 on "The Conditions of a Restored Union"; he wrote in '66 the Cleveland letters, which cost him friends, on "Reconstruction of the Southern States"; in '69 he gave his people a thrilling sermon on "National Unity." When Grant died it was he whom Boston summoned to pronounce her eulogy. In all the remaining years of his ministry he never failed to lend his voice to great public causes, pleading for the gold standard as against free silver; for civil service reform and the election of Grover Cleveland in order to its speedier realization; for commercial honor and honesty in the business life of the country. Of course he was assailed in some quarters for bringing such subjects into the pulpit. He made his answer in '69 to such assailants in a sermon with the title "The Sphere of the Christian Minister." Part of that answer I quote:

> There is nothing more untrue than that every man understands his own business best, if by that you mean that he understands

it in its largest relations, in its results on the general welfare. . . The moment a man so conducts his profession that it touches the question of right and wrong he comes into my sphere. There I stand; and I put God's measure, the golden reed of the sanctuary, on him and his course, and I am not meddling. . . A man may preach politics too much. A man may do it foolishly. A man may administer a bank foolishly, manufacture foolishly, but that is no reason why a bank should not be established, why a man should not engage in manufacturing. A minister may not be discreet in preaching upon secular topics, but that is no reason why they should not be preached upon. There have been indiscreet ministers from the days of the Apostles, and it would be strange if in the future there should not be found here and there one that is not discreet. But the duty of introducing such topics is now generally acknowledged.

"So it is," comments Mr. Beecher's friend and publisher, John R. Howard, "very largely because of the courage and persistence, the intense moral earnestness and the large conservative wisdom of Henry Ward Beecher."

But such a prejudice is not so easily dispelled as these two seemed to think. Recently the President of the Lutheran Synod of New York burst forth with such hostile dissent as this:

The community fails to get the real value it should from the preacher because it is constantly putting upon him responsibility unrelated to his great office. A public hall is needed; the community decides to build one. It appoints the local clergyman to collect the funds. Or maybe a town fire department needs to be organized and the pastor is expected to take charge. He is placed on all sorts of committees, baby's milk committees, health committees and what-not. The members of the local Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club, invite him to their dinners so that he may "jolly" them along with optimistic speeches. And to cap it all the local politicians descend upon

him for the use of his parish hall, and even of his church, for their propaganda. . . It is natural that the warm-hearted, eager pastor, especially when he is a man of ability, should be looked up to as a leader of numerous causes; but it ends in cluttering up his life and preventing him from giving to the community that spiritual message for which he has equipped himself. . . The man who enriches the world in spiritual things does so only by following the words of the first preacher to the Gentiles who for himself and for the future church flung out the challenge, "This one thing I do."

So, you will have to choose, brethren, between these two policies, that of isolation in your restricted parish, with no interest in the general affairs of your community and no message applicable to its every-day concerns, and that other, more truly Pauline policy, "I become all things to all men if by any means I may save some." Even in a little rural church, it is better to say with Wesley, "The world is my parish." Your eternal and spiritual truth is a message that relates to all the practical ethics of commerce, of politics, of agriculture, of human affairs of every type. "Other-worldliness," as George Eliot sarcastically called exclusive devotion to the invisible, is a source of power indeed for your ministry, but it is not the sole objective of your preaching. Your effort is not merely to get men into heaven, it is also to get heaven into them, that every human relation they sustain may be celestialized. The gospel is social no less than it is individual. The wrongs, the abuses, the sordid materialisms, the shabby politics, and mean dishonesties of the life about you, must have a place in your thinking, your preaching, and your praying, if you are to be anything more

than a Simeon Stylites, your pulpit your lofty pillar, from which you look upward, with only negligent scorn for the seething world below. Savonarola lived for Florence, Knox for Scotland; Baxter identified himself with Kidderminster, Bunyan with Bedford, Dale with Birmingham, Beecher, through Brooklyn, with his country and the world. Not in the measure of such great souls, but in your own humbler way and sphere, be it yours to serve, not merely your local handful, but "your own generation, according to the will of God." Great issues like prohibition, the war against war, the new internationalism, the economic inequalities of the existing social order, await your best thinking and your most tactful and skilful handling of the teachings and example of Jesus, in relation to them all. God give you wisdom for such a ministry to this world, in the light of that which is to come.

X

FREDERICK WILLIAM ROBERTSON
(1816–1853)

PREACHING AND CHIVALRY

FREDERICK WILLIAM ROBERTSON

I

It was fifty-six years ago. A young man of twenty was at home for the vacation between his junior and senior years in college. He was tossed to and fro in mind as to his future vocation. The home to which he had come was a parsonage. His father was the minister of a little Baptist church. From the birth of this son he had dedicated him to God and to the gospel ministry. But the glamor of work on the college paper, and of constant participation in the exercises of the student's Literary Society had diverted the son's mind into another channel. He was oscillating between a longing to enter journalism and his desire to gratify his father. Into that humble manse had come recently, by purchase, the *Life and Letters* and the published sermons of Frederick William Robertson. The father, a stout-minded conservative in his theological views, "refused to make his judgment blind" by reading only the books of men whose opinions accorded with his own. He knew that many, then, called Robertson a heretic. But he would judge for himself and learn at first hand what a distinguished advocate had to say for beliefs contrary to the strictly evangelical position.

Little did he think when he placed those volumes on his shelves that he was deciding the future of his son. All that summer the young collegian was lost

to the world in the study of these books. It was his first taste of literature of that type. For weeks he read nothing else, scarcely taking time to eat or sleep. Both the man and his message were a fascination. He felt increasingly the effect of that chivalrous devotion which is inseparable from Robertson's ministry. Then, for the first time he found himself full-face with Jesus—the Man of the Gospels. The New Testament became to him what hitherto it had never been—a book of life. All his boyhood's vague notions of Christ and Christianity were transformed into a fresh and living faith. The ministry, as a calling of God to serve and suffer with Christ, took on the aspect of a soldier's fealty to his commander and his cause. To enlist at once seemed the only course possible. Within a year the novice had preached his first sermon and was "licensed" by the church that heard it. You will not wonder, in view of this recital of his early experience, that this fledgling of the seventies, after fifty-three years of service as an ordained minister, is eager to pass on, if he can, to younger men preparing to preach, his life-long sense of indebtedness to him whom Sir William Robertson Nicoll called "that good soldier of Jesus Christ, that just and faithful knight of God, that royal preacher—Frederick William Robertson." Of course one cannot hope in a brief lecture to transfer the thrill of his own contacts with the man thus felicitously characterized. It is largely true, as Coleridge said, that "Experience is like the stern-

light of a ship at sea: It lights only the track that has been passed over." But you can, if you will, expose yourselves to the same inspiring and illuminating fellowship with this great soul. His *Life and Letters* by Stopford A. Brooke, the volumes of his all but matchless sermons, his expository lectures on Genesis, the First Book of Samuel, and the Epistles to the Corinthians, his address on The Study of Poetry, and on Wordsworth in particular, are all available. Steep yourselves in them. Give special attention to the man as delineated by those who were intimate with him. Their personal tributes are in the Appendix of the *Life and Letters.* By such a study you will be lifted into a realm of Christian knighthood all too rare of clerical realization. A contagious nobility of nature and aim will make your own hearts kindle with finer ideals of character as related to influence. A fresh and fuller vision of the glory and opportunity of the Christian ministry, as "a *high* calling of God," will be yours. Best result of all, the Jesus of the Gospels will become for you, in a new degree, a living, breathing, constraining Reality—the truly human incarnation of Divine love and truth, sympathy and sacrifice.

II

The bare outlines of Robertson's career are soon drawn. He was born in London in the house of his grandfather, Colonel Robertson, on February third, 1816. He died on the fifteenth of August, 1853, aged

thirty-seven years and six months. His ministerial life covered only thirteen years. The brevity of his span is out of all proportion to the duration and spread of his influence. This year is the seventy-third since his death. He was then but narrowly known even in England. Some one has said, "Ministers are soon forgotten"; but not he. He is still a living force. "It is," says Doctor Brastow, "since his death that his place as a preacher has been established throughout the English-speaking world and on the Continent of Europe." Dean Stanley, who reckoned Robertson the greatest preacher of the nineteenth century, met a French military surgeon—a revolutionary and an unbeliever—who was deeply interested in Robertson; and the next day an eminent official and a devout Catholic questioned him about "an extraordinary preacher whose name was Frederick Robertson." In his "Commendation" prefixed to the three-volume edition of the sermons in *Everyman's Library* (the best edition for a student with a shallow purse,) Canon Barnett declares:

> They have gone through as many editions as a popular novel, they have been the frequent companions of men and women who are not generally found among sermon readers, and they are today nearly as modern and as fresh as on the day they were first spoken.

Robertson Nicoll said, in an editorial celebrating the centenary of Robertson's birth, "multitudes have been moved by him as by no other teacher, and there is that in his sermons which may keep them alive for

another hundred years." Thirty-seven years of life, and a prospective two centuries of posthumous influence! It is a marvel of ministerial efficiency.

Robertson was of Scottish descent. His father, Captain Robertson, of the Royal Artillery, was one of the Struan branch of that family. His mother, Sarah, was of the old Scottish family of the Bethunes. His lineage explains some features of his temperament. There was ever a "dark line" in his face, and a downcast spirit often oppressed him. As a child he lived for five years with his parents in the old Leith Fort near Edinburgh, where, he says, "I was rocked and cradled to the roar of artillery." He was the eldest child of seven. Two of his brothers won distinction as officers in the Kaffir war. Another brother was a captain in the Royal South Lincoln militia. The three sisters of the family all passed away before Frederick was twenty-five. Their early loss added another strain to the sense of loneliness and depression against which he always had to contend. His earliest teachers were his parents. His father when Robertson was five years old retired from the army on half-pay. For four years he devoted himself to the education of his children. Not till the eldest son was nine did he enter a public school. His early home, with its refinement and culture, its discipline and affection, its piety, purity, and honor, was the mold in which a rarely exquisite nature was fashioned into a manhood as rare. When Robertson was thirteen the family went to France. In Tours he studied the

classics with a private tutor, attended a French seminary, and acquired an accurate knowledge of the French language. Later in life he added German to his acquisitions.

All these years Robertson had looked forward to a military life. The family tradition was strongly in that direction. But the father felt that the finer fiber of his son's character fitted him rather for the ministry of the church, and urged him in that direction. But the son would have none of it: "Anything but that," he said, "I am not fit for it." After a brief experience in a solicitor's office an application was finally made for an appointment in the army. His name was placed on a list for a cavalry regiment, serving in India. While the definite assignment lingered he entered heartily into anticipative preparations for a soldier's life. He became an expert horseman, an exact shot, a capable draughtsman. But still the official designation did not come. It began to be thought in the family that his name had been pigeonholed for all time. Again the father and many friends urged the ministry upon him. He finally yielded, and left for Oxford to begin his preparation for it. A few weeks after he matriculated at Brasenose College, there came the long-delayed appointment to the regiment in India. But he had made his decision and would not retract it. No waverer was he. His disappointment was keen and from time to time recurs in his utterances; but he came eventually to construe the event as from the hand of an overruling Provi-

dence. He once alluded to a unique chain of trivial circumstances which were associated with his final decision, in these words:

> If I had not met a certain person, I should not have changed my profession; if I had not known a certain lady I should not probably have met this person; if that lady had not had a delicate daughter who was disturbed by the barking of my dog; if my dog had not barked that night, I should now have been in the Dragoons or fertilizing the soil of India.

"All his life long," said his biographer, "he was a soldier at heart." Far on in his ministry, deprecating what he mistakenly thought to be the superficial nature of the interest in his preaching, he exclaimed in an hour of depression, "I would rather have led a forlorn hope than mount the pulpit stairs." When he was ordained the Bishop of Winchester, on presenting his papers to him, gave him as his life's motto the text from which his future rector had preached the ordination sermon, "Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." Nobly did his life fulfil the motto.

His life at Oxford was marked by utmost industry. He devoted himself much to the study of the sciences —chemistry, geology, botany, and natural history—as tending more to exact thinking and mental discipline. His work was, however discursive, in all respects thorough. What he learned he knew. He refused to "read for honors." Even when the examiners, in the "finals," sent to urge his tutor to influence him to change his purpose, in view of the exact and thorough

nature of his first papers, he still refused. Throughout his college years he read studiously and widely in philosophy, literature, and poetry. When, in later life, shattered health reduced his power of application, he said:

> I could read once, and did. I read hard at the University, or not at all, never skimming, and Plato, Aristotle, Butler, Thucydides, Jonathan Edwards, passed, like the iron atoms of the blood, into my mental constitution.

He had entire familiarity, too, with the poetry of Coleridge, Shelley, Shakespeare, and Wordsworth. His analysis of Tennyson's *In Memoriam* is the best interpretation of the *disjecta membra* of that majestic and triumphant wrestle with Doubt and Death. By nature a poet without the practise of the art, by instinct a lover of Beauty in all its forms, he made himself by hard study a thinker, at home in all the subtleties of the mind, and their expression. As an instance of his devotion at the University to distinctive preparation for his holy calling, we have the testimony of a fellow student that, in those years he committed to memory the whole of the New Testament in both Greek and English. His devotional life was constant. His abstinence from everything coarse and low was emphatic both as to his own conduct, and in spoken protest against the low moral tone of the University atmosphere. He did not mingle much with the social life of either "town or gown." He was at Oxford as everywhere a distinctly individual and lonely soul. Wrote one, of him, in these student years:

I rejoice to think of him as I knew him at Oxford—warm, generous, and noble-hearted; conspicuous for talent, irreproachable in conduct: and, what was most of all valuable, and the most cheering subject of retrospect now, one who carried the banner of the Cross without fear, and was not ashamed of Christ in a place which, though professedly consecrated to his service, offered perhaps more hindrances than helps to a decidedly Christian profession.

In my seminary days, here, Doctor Weston used to say of me (the glint of compliment giving keener edge to the criticism), "All Humpstone's geese are swans." It may be the impression I make so far, as you suspect me of a studied process of selection, is the feeling, "What a moral and intellectual prig the young Robertson must have been." But reach no such erroneous conclusion. Robertson was the soul of sincerity; of simplicity and honesty of character. All his University associates, all his friends of later days, agree in the estimate of one of them, "He was totally devoid of pride or assumption, . . . free from affectation, egotism, or pedantry of any kind." Says another, "No cloud rests upon my memory of him." Still a third,

I am not fulsome when I say of him that the Spirit of Christ saturated everything he said and did. . . I have never learnt so much of the mind of Christ and what is meant by following Christ as from him.

And a fourth puts on, for all us moderns, this capstone, to the tributes:

Edward Irving as you will remember, in an ordination charge, said to a young Scottish minister, "Be the clergyman always,

less than the clergyman never." Robertson's words would have been, "Be the man always, the Christian man, and less than the man never." The priestly self-consciousness implied in Irving's counsel would have been intolerable to Robertson,

and that at every stage of his career.

III

After Robertson's ordination at Winchester on July 12, 1840, the chief spheres of his ministry were a curacy of two years in that city; another of five years at Cheltenham; a brief incumbency of three months at St. Ebbes, Oxford, and then his crowning six years of untrammeled and independent service at Trinity Chapel, Brighton. Neither at Winchester nor at Cheltenham was he restful or satisfied in his work. He had not yet won his way out of what became to him the arid formulas of a conventional evangelicalism to a personal and satisfying conception of Christ and the gospel, vital for his own soul. As he grew in mental grasp, he grew away from much that at the beginning of his intellectual life had sufficed him. He had escaped the contagion of Newman and the Tractarian movement at Oxford. But the ferments of his first years as an active minister were gradually dissolving his confidence in some of the doctrinal statements he had once held to be vital elements of the truth of Jesus. His misgivings seem to have driven him at last into the innermost wilderness of doubt, where he, too, as Mark says of our Lord in his temptations, "was with the wild beasts." In both

these earlier spheres his intense devotion to pulpit and parish work, commingling with the strain of this intellectual turbulence, reacted upon his health. Neither sphere seemed to fit him and the irk of the fact wrought havoc with his peace of body and mind. He left Winchester to recruit his bodily health by travel on the Continent. He left Cheltenham, after five years of restlessness in service, not merely for his body's sake, but to fight for the integrity of his intellectual and spiritual life. It was the crisis hour for his ministry. He fled alone to the Bavarian Tyrol. Amid the solemnities and wild beauties of the mountains "he beat his music out" and finally found a firm foundation for the faith of his later years. The victory lasted the remainder of his ministerial life, and became the upspringing fountain of a wealth of truth and power. As preacher, teacher, and spiritual guide he sprang as at one bound from dwarf to giant. Thenceforward he could say with Paul, "Let no man trouble me; I bear about the marks of the Lord Jesus"; not the physical stigmata of St. Francis, but the actual impress upon his personality of the personality of his Lord; the Cross inwrought into mind and will, to color thenceforth all his thinking, all his self-expression. In the sanctuary of a great fear, issuing in a great travail of soul, he won his life, by holding fast to the anchorage of the "everlasting yea" of the moral law within himself. He has left no detailed account of this life-and-death struggle. He referred to it in public, perhaps, once. A passage, wondrously

wrought and tense, in one of his addresses to the working men of Brighton, bears every mark of an autobiographical experience. It runs as follows:

It is an awful moment when the soul begins to find that the props on which it has blindly rested so long, are, many of them, rotten, and begins to suspect them all; when it begins to feel the nothingness of many of the traditionary opinions which have been received with implicit confidence, and in that horrible insecurity begins also to doubt whether there be anything to believe at all. It is an awful hour—let him who has passed through it say how awful—when this life has lost its meaning, and seems shriveled into a span; when the grave appears to be the end of all, human goodness nothing but a name, and the sky above this universe a dead expanse, black with the void from which God himself has disappeared. In that fearful loneliness of spirit when those who should have been his friends and counselors only frown upon his misgivings, and profanely bid him stifle doubts, which for aught he knows may arise from the fountain of truth itself; to extinguish as a glare from hell, that which for aught he knows may be a light from heaven, and everything seems wrapped in hideous uncertainty, I know but one way in which a man may come forth from his agony scatheless; it is by holding fast to those things which are certain still—the grand simple landmarks of morality. In the darkest hour through which a human soul can pass, whatever else is doubtful, this at least is certain. If there be no God and no future state, yet even then, it is better to be generous than selfish, better to be chaste than licentious, better to be true than to be false, better to be brave than to be a coward. Blessed beyond all earthly blessedness is the man who in the tempestuous darkness of the soul has dared to hold fast these venerable landmarks. Thrice blessed is he who—when all is drear and cheerless within and without, when his teachers terrify him and his friends shrink from him—has obstinately clung to moral good. Thrice blessed because *his* night shall pass into clear bright day.

I appeal to any man who has passed through that hour of agony, and stood upon the rock at last, the surges stilled below him, and

the last cloud drifted from the sky above, with a faith, and hope, and trust no longer traditional, but his own—a trust which neither earth nor hell shall shake thenceforth forever.

Robertson brought to Brighton the blessedness of such an illuminated deliverance from the fogs of doubt. It is to his Brighton ministry of six years that we owe all the printed trophies of his last years to which I referred in beginning this lecture. This, then, is the place for some fuller reference to these sermons. They have been described by a discriminating hearer of many of them as they fell from the preacher's lips. These are his words, just and true and adequate:

> Robertson's sermons, even as we now possess them, are the bloom and wonder of modern pulpit eloquence. Exceptionally lucid in expression, they reveal such a combination of the analytic with the constructive and imaginative faculty; . . . they indicate such intense prophetic earnestness; they contain such fearless denunciations of evil, in high places and low; they manifest such a sympathy on the part of their author with the lonely, the hard working, the suffering, and the poor; they display such a mastery of the latest European thought, so profound an acquaintance with both the letter and the spirit of the Scriptures, as of the innermost secrets of the life which is "hid in God"—its sorrows, its battling with doubts, its triumph through clinging to the Cross of Christ; they disclose such a creative ability to turn truisms into living truths, or to convert the dry bones of orthodox assertions into vital influences for the daily life; they show such a grasp of great spiritual and historical principles, such a power to sever the essential from the accidental in the discussion of questions of Christian casuistry . . . that Robertson must be pronounced of all later Christian public speakers, easily the prince. He was at once philosopher, poet, priest, and prophet.

From another regular attendant upon the ministry in Trinity Chapel, we get a first-hand impression of the

effect of preacher upon hearer. It is as if, by this vivid description, we are introduced into the very presence of the listeners:

> I cannot describe in words the strange sensation, during his sermon, of union with him and communion with one another which filled us as he spoke. I used to feel as if every one in the congregation was thrilling with my emotion and that his suppressed excitement was partly due to his consciousness of our excitement. Nor can I describe to you the sense we had of a higher Presence with us as he spoke—the sacred awe which filled our hearts, the hushed stillness in which the smallest sound was startling—the unexpected light which came upon the faces of some when an expression struck home and made them feel, "This man speaks to me." . . . And when the close came and silence almost awful fell upon the church, . . . I have often seen men so rapt that they could not move till the sound of the organ aroused them to the certainty that the preacher had ceased to speak.

If these fervors seem in contrast, somewhat, with the discourses as printed, we may not forget that the sermons as we have them, with all their chastened beauty of style and the clarity of the thought they convey, are but partial reports of what was said and felt in their actual delivery. Some of them were written out, by Robertson himself, after they had been preached, to oblige friends persistently entreating for their preservation. The chivalry of such reproduction with the pen of what the tongue has ceased to say, only they can appreciate who have undertaken so difficult a task. Others of the sermons are the short-hand reports of one who had learned the art that she might preserve inestimable truths from perishing with their utterance. Some of them, perhaps, may be from the

very manuscripts to which Robertson referred when describing to his bishop his method of preparation for the pulpit:

> The word *extempore* does not exactly describe the way I preach. I first make copious notes; then draw out a form, or rough plan; afterwards I write copiously, sometimes twice or thrice, the thoughts, to disentangle them and arrange them into a connected whole; then make a syllabus, and, lastly, a skeleton which I take into the pulpit.

Robertson published but one sermon in his lifetime, and that only after much importunity. It was the one on the death of the Queen Dowager, entitled, *The Israelite's Grave in a Foreign Land.* Like all the sermons it is Biblical and textual, and displays his customary ingenuity in drawing out from the text the truths it suggests for his own day and purpose; but only after a strict attention to the historical situation and the actual first sense of the passage. He is a master of this deductive process and usually contents himself with two main thoughts or divisions. His style is simple, clear, with the beauty of restraint, not that of exuberance, a vehicle for the definite thoughts, logically pressed home, which give weight and worth to every discourse. One has said of him that "he wrings out of every text, whether from the Old or the New Testament, every last dreg of the thought it contains or implies." But, now, let me urge you to put homiletic analysis aside and to come to the frequent use of these sermons for your own soul's sake. Learn here how to construe the illusiveness of life;

how to defy its transitoriness. Feel as you read the pathos of an irreparable past. Listen here to the voice of the Good Shepherd calling his own sheep by name; and beware the self-saving hireling whose own the sheep are not. Contemplate afresh the kingdom of the truth and cultivate with new zeal the purpose to be always, and above all things, true. Let the sympathy of a human Saviour comfort and cheer you. Learn that obedience is an organ for knowing higher reality than the senses can achieve. Get a new vision of the significance of Jesus for God and man; a wider appreciation of the efficacy of his Cross for human sin and sorrow alike—the eternal symbol for your own devotion unto death; the surest interpretation of your suffering and your travail. All these things and scores besides Robertson's sermons will teach you if you will use them studiously and with reflection. I shall hold myself to have failed if I do not draw every one to an initial or a renewed interest in his preaching.

IV

It is singular with what unanimity all who have come to know him, through his sermons, addresses, and letters, agree that the word chivalry is a touchstone for his character and ministry. Even so hard-headed an intellectual as the late R. H. Hutton, so long the distinguished editor of the London *Spectator,* was impressed on hearing him by "a certain effect of chivalry and romance." He then proceeded to attempt for himself and others an explanation of the effect:

This half-ideal and romantic aspect of his influence was due to a number of causes; a little perhaps to the symmetry of his figure and his faultless features; more to the half-commanding air and military carriage expressing, if not resulting from, his strong passion for a soldier's life and his eager preparation for it in youth; still more to the hectic expression of nervous suffering which his constitutional delicacy, his liability to strong excitement, and the lassitude that followed it, left almost always more or less trace upon his face; and very much also to that delicate poetic sensibility to physical influences which always speaks out plainly in the face, and that, too, in a way to invite even more sympathy than the lines of those deeper and more permanent cares which never vary with the expression of the moment. All these causes together produced a temperament and an expression which it was singularly difficult to connect with the commonplace framework of daily life. A high strung tension of nerve, due certainly in some measure to disease, seemed to mark his face even in repose. The slight undercurrent of fever which was, with him, due to physical delicacy, heightened the moral colors of his mind, and gave them that air of ideality and romance for which the young are always thirsting. Not only his extraordinary eloquence but all the constituents which went to make that eloquence conspired to deepen this impression.

This deft and minute analysis surely stresses overmuch the merely physical and superficial aspects of an impressive and chivalrous personality. It turns the whole question into an abnormality, with disease as its main cause. But one likes to go deeper and farther for his analysis of the real chivalry of Robertson's career, and to ground it in moral and spiritual realities of character, rather than in physical beauty or "constitutional delicacy." It was not effeminate, this chivalry of his. It was masculine to the core of it, with all the knightly attributes and fervors of a medieval Christian warrior against wrong, injustice, cruelty,

and untruth. This finer chivalry is compounded of fealty to God, to the church, to a comrade in war or peace; to the weak and helpless, to women and children. Only a Gibbon could afford to sneer at it as "the love of God and the ladies." Its fullest flower in the Middle Ages was the enthronement and glorification of the Madonna. Its finest manly embodiment was that of Sir Galahad,

> Whose strength was as the strength of ten
> Because his heart was pure.

It blossoms as courtesy, continence, and pity. It looms as faith, as courage, as obedience; as truth-speaking and troth-keeping; in largesse of life and substance.

> Haughtiness, pride, vainglory, were to be held vices by the Christian knight . . . who should rather depreciate himself and his exploits, though never lowering his purpose to achieve.

This is Henry Osborne Taylor's analysis of that ancient chivalry which went deeper than mere bravura, and goes to the very roots of personality as thought, feeling, and will. It was over against this ideal that Chaucer conceived his "gentil parfait knight." Such chivalry is a great spirit of adventure; a bold, brave assumption of risks; a crusade that counts not the cost to serve. Of such like was the chivalry of Robertson. It revealed itself in his loyalty to the Bible, as being what it is, and not what it is not; to its real use and significance for the life of man. It was manifest in his passionate devotion to Jesus Christ, made plain in such of his words as these:

"None but Christ!" Of one thing I have become distinctly conscious, that my motto for life, my whole heart's expression, is "None but Christ"—to feel as he felt; to judge the world as he judged and estimated it—this is the one thing worth living for.

His was a chivalry of the Cross, in the effort like his Master to learn obedience by the things he suffered. It was a chivalry of courtesy and fairness to opponents and detractors—of both he had a flock. He was looking ever for the soul of truth in things superficially erroneous; for the obscured goodness, and the seed of better things, in what seemed, and even in what was, evil. It was the chivalry that made him a warrior against the mean, the low, the coarse, the false—lance ever in rest, blade ever sharp, in the service of truth and righteousness. He was the enemy too of what Robert Browning symbolized by "the unlit lamp, the ungirt loin"; slackness and low aim were categories he despised. His was a chivalry of the search for truth, the love of truth, the spread of truth, that revealed itself as courage in defiance of doubt, and in its defeat. It was a chivalry that, from earliest youth, held woman in that lofty place defined in his sermon on *The Glory of the Virgin Mother,* and held himself, and all he could influence, to an ideal of personal purity as shining, intense, and strong as Galahad's own. His was the chivalry that could stoop, without condescension, to make himself the brother and intellectual helper of the working man, in a land where class distinctions count as they do not here; and yet could speak with equal courage the "message of the church to men of

wealth." When at last the time came to go down the valley to so premature an end, his was the chivalry, that while his brain blazed in a fever of agony, still held aloft the Cross, his banner always, with the spirit of a great adventure in his heart. It is these, and other greatnesses such as they, manifest in his letters, his sermons, and his life, that have given and will long continue to give permanence to the man and his message.

Is one wrong in judging that a revival of this type of chivalry, in the hearts of our ministry, present and to come, is greatly to be desired? Have we not lost out of our drab and drudging lives this appreciation of our calling as a romantic crusade? Is there a lower sense of honor among us than was cherished by our forefathers? Is there a finer spirit of courtesy among scientists than among theologians; a more determined endeavor to understand and help one another? Have jealousy, strife, and even hate, yet been banished from among us? Have we in our common task the thrill of a great adventure born of high faith in our mission; courage to fulfil it, kindled to the glowing point? Or, have we lost heart amid the perplexities of creeds, the bitterness of disputes about them, and the barrage of opposing forces of evil? In that book which records a great exploit that in one sense was also a great failure, *The Fight for Everest,* there is an experience narrated by Bentley Beetham, on the night after it became certain that Mallory and Irvine had lost their lives upon the mountain:

That night as I lay in my sleeping-bag, looking out through the doorway of the tent I could see the whole of the historic ground, the scene of the protracted adventure spread out like a map, and bathed in soft, full moonlight. That night, and with that scene in front of one, it was quite easy to realize that the price of life is death, and that so long as the payment be made promptly, it matters little to the individual when the payment is made. Somewhere up there in that vast wilderness of ice and rock were the two still forms. Yesterday with all the vigor and will of perfect manhood they were playing a great game, their life's desire. Today it was over and they had gone, without their ever knowing the beginning of decay. Could any man desire a better end? Was it worth while? That still-born question is surely a product of town-life. It could never arise like a canker to infest our thought out there on the plateau in front of the great mountain.

Can it be that, without the explorer's spirit, his hardy chivalry, some of us have deteriorated to take a merely "*town-life*" view of our task, asking timidly, shrinkingly, "What price glory?" face to face with the summits of the world, at once our challenge and our opportunity.

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